



Knight Templar

VOLUME LXVII

February 2021

NUMBER 2





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The cover photo is of the ruins of the ancient city of Bet Shean in Israel. Photo by the editor.

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

Grand Master's Message

Greetings Sir Knights. The Grand Encampment officers hope that you and yours are doing well in these trying times. It is no secret that history will record the COVID-19 pandemic as the defining event of this triennium. However, as I pen this message, the federal Food and Drug Administration has just approved the first of which we hope will be several more corona virus vaccines. Now is the time to maintain your vigilance and discipline, and hopefully we will be able to resume more normal activities soon.

Your Grand Encampment officers have made the decision to continue holding the department conferences virtually. We have been able to use videoconferencing technology and communicate essential information in a safe setting. In fact, this technology has actually made the conferences more accessible. If a Sir Knight was unable to attend his "home" conference, he has been easily able to attend a subsequent conference. Our leadership courses have also proven to be conducive to a virtual setting. Next up is the East Central Department Conference which will be held virtually on March 13.

The next large Grand Encampment event will be the annual Easter Observance on Sunday, April 4. Although we do not know what the future may hold, out of an abundance of caution, we have opted to combine the three Easter Observances into one virtual national observance. The service will be arranged by and conducted under the direction of our grand prelate with the assistance of our two associate grand prelates. We are considering a later start to allow as many Sir Knights and their families as possible to participate.

For those of you who, like me, enjoy reading about and studying the history of the Grand Encampment, we are pleased to announce that through a partnership with the George Washington Masonic National Memorial and its Masonic digital archives project, we have made most of the past Triennial proceedings available for your purview in a digital format. Hopefully, by the time you finish reading them, the pandemic will be history. Enjoy!

Courteously,
Jeffrey N. Nelson, GCT
Grand Master



Easter Announcement!

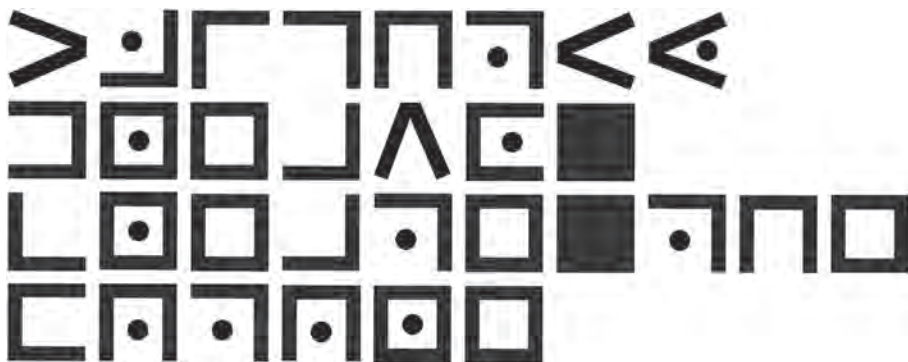
The Grand Encampment Knight Templar
Easter Service for 2021 will now be one
virtual service starting at 11:00 am EST.

IN MEMORIAM



Robert Joseph Landry, Sr.
Maine
Grand Commander 2004
Born: December 8, 1937
Died: November 22, 2020

Kenneth C. Weaver, Sr.
Delaware
Deputy Grand Commander
Born: November 9, 1954
Died: December 12, 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>.

Prelate's Apartment

by

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

If he should set his heart to it and gather to himself his spirit and his breath, all flesh would perish together, and man would return to dust. (Job 34:14-15 English Standard Version)

Recently, I received a call from our grand recorder with a question from a Sir Knight who wanted to know if there were any reasons a Christian, and especially a Templar, could not be cremated. I have been frequently asked that question as a pastor. So, with his encouragement, I would like to offer a few words on the topic of cremation for your consideration.

Cremation is not addressed in Scripture at all. Archaeologists tell us that cremation has existed since before the time of Christ, although it was not the practice of our Jewish brothers and sisters, where burial was and is still generally within twenty-four hours of death. Embalming, practiced from the times of ancient Egypt to the present day, delays the process of decomposition but certainly does not prevent it. Biblically speaking, there is no reason a Christian cannot be cremated. Cremated or not, from dust we were created, and to dust we shall return. The only difference is in how quickly.

For some, the concern about cremation is what will happen at the Second Coming, when the dead shall be raised and enter into the presence of God Almighty. If one is cremated, some ask, how can the body be raised? My friends, this is the wrong question. Remember, God created Adam from the dust of the earth. God is also all-powerful, and there is nothing that God cannot do. Therefore, the question really is, "Is the resurrection of the dead really going to happen?" The short answer is "Yes, because God has promised that in His holy Word."

Therefore, since God is all-powerful, and our trust is in God to be faithful to His promises to His people, we can rest assured that it matters not if we are cremated or buried. If we are cremated, it matters not if our ashes are spread in many places, placed in an urn, in the ground, in a columbarium niche, or on the mantle over the fireplace.

Cremation is a decision for you and your loved ones to make. It is not prohibited by Scripture and certainly not by Templar law. Know that God will be faithful to His promise in any case.



The Templar Spirit of Thankfulness After Our Worthy Endeavors

by
Sir Knight James A. Marples, K.T.

Most of us, as Masons and Templars, are familiar with modern prayers of invocation and benediction at our meetings. However, we often forget to give thanks after many of our endeavors. It might behoove us to reflect on precisely what those words mean and why and when we should invoke such prayers of blessing. Many people give thanks or utter a small prayer upon awakening. Also, it is common for a multitude of people to say grace or a prayer over meals to sanctify the food we partake of, the hands that prepared it, and the Creator who gave us such bounty. These prayers of thankfulness can vary from the casual, to the unique styled prayer, to a formal prayer of grace. The term comes from the Ecclesiastical Latin phrase: "*gratiarum actio*" or "act of thanks."

Many people say grace before meals; sadly, fewer do after meals. The prayer of grace before meals which I am most familiar with is:

"Bless us O Lord, and these,
Thy gifts, which we are about to
receive from Thy bounty, through
Christ, our Lord. Amen."

The prayer after meals is generally:

"We give Thee thanks, Almighty
God, for all Thy benefits, who lives
and reigns for ever and ever. Amen."



A noted Christian commentary on "The Christian Grace of Thanksgiving" gives a good appraisal of the true depths which prayer should reach. It notes:

"The *New Testament* describes the Christian Life as a spiritual warfare, a fierce, unrelenting battle with the forces of evil that seek to destroy us.... It is a long and arduous process, like an Olympic marathon, that demands all our energies and requires great powers of endurance if we are to reach the goal and win the victor's crown. It is a discipleship, a rigorous

process of training and growth in Christlikeness of character.”

That takes fortitude to accomplish. Furthermore, it takes a dedicated conscience to instill such a habit into a person’s daily routine. Yet, the ancient Knights Templar were taught that habit, and it served them well, giving thanks after battles as well as before battles.

Most of us have experienced sights of perhaps a football game with a team huddling in prayer. However, it is a pretty rare sight to see prayers after the countdown clock winds-down to zero. Too often, the cheerfulness or giddy happiness of victory obscures the sentiment of thankfulness that we should also remember to profess. As Templar Masons, we need to reflect upon that more.

I am very impressed with a plate from the year 1912 “Offering of Prayer after the Battle.” If you look very closely near the horse’s hooves, that phrase is inscribed upon the plate permanently.

The noted Masonic scholar, Brother, and Sir Knight Albert G. Mackey, M.D., 33^o and a past commander of South Carolina Commandery 1 of Knights Templar, describes prayer as “a proper tribute of gratitude to the beneficent Author of Life.” Although prayers of invocation and benediction may vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, Mackey quotes the well respected Masonic ritualist, Preston, who stated in the year 1775:

“May the favor of Heaven be upon this, our happy meeting. May it be begun, carried on, and ended in order, harmony, and brotherly love. Amen. So mote it be.”

Also:

“May the blessing of Heaven be with us and all regular Masons to beautify and cement us to every moral and social virtue. Amen. So mote it be.”

In more recent times the latter phrase has been slightly modified to generally:

“May brotherly love prevail, and every moral and social virtue cement us. Amen. So mote it be.”

Sir Knight Mackey surprisingly stated that:

“We cannot doubt that the German stone masons were even more religiously demonstrative than their English Brethren...”

Although today, sectarian squabbles about specific religious topics are not to be discussed within a tyled Masonic Lodge, it is interesting that Mackey states that for a brief time during the reign of Edward IV, from 1461 to 1483, there was an ancient formula of prayer to be used [by] Christian Masons at the appointing of a new brother, which is as follows:

“The might of God, the Father of Heaven, with the wisdom of His glorious Son, through the goodness of the Holy Ghost, that hath been three persons in one God-head be with us at our beginning, give us grace to govern in our living here, that we may only come to His bliss that shall never have an end.”



Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania's Allegheny Commandery 35 commemorative plate with the circular motto beside the horse's hooves "Offering of Prayer after the Battle." Notice the armor protecting the Knight's steed.

Sir Knight Mackey notes that from time to time, the Grand Encampment has been inconsistent with which form of "The Lord's Prayer" to use concerning the wording of trespass and trespases. Mackey tells readers to see St. Matthew 6:12 and St. Luke 11:1-13. Among early Craft Masons, they "again assembled after labor, prayer was offered, and their wages paid to them." Thus, prayer was an indispensable practice of stone masons as well as later modern speculative Masons in giving thanks both before and knight templar

after major endeavors.

Mackey mentioned that some Royal Arch Chapter dinners in England used the Latin words: "*Benedictus, Bened at,*" meaning "May the Blessed One, bless." After the dinner, there was an equally brief prayer, also in Latin: "*benedicto benedicatur*" meaning "May the Blessed One be blessed."

Our ancient Knights Templar very rarely had time to say any prayers before battle. They might have been ambushed, in fast pursuit of the Saracens, or just ex-

hausted. Traditionally, legend has it that the Knights Templar would sing: "*non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed nomini tuo da gloriam*" which is roughly translated, "not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to Thy name give glory."

As odd as it may seem, the battle cry and simultaneous quick prayer of



the ancient Knights Templar was simply: "Beauceant!" This was also the name of their banner.

The distinctive, divided black and white coloring of a Templar beauceant, sometimes historically spelled beauseant, is more than coincidental. It is reminiscent of the colors of the mosaic pavement, which is several rows of alternating black and white stones mixed together in a pattern which the Italians call *musaico*, while the French people call it *mosaique*. This color-scheme has been used in buildings in Jerusalem and elsewhere in the Holy Land for centuries.

In actuality, the ancient Knights barely

had any time for anything before a battle, except to prepare and fight. The Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem is another papal knighthood. Its motto and prayer of supplication is simply "*Deus lo vult*," or "God wills It." The ancient Knights Kadosh adapted a simpler version, simply "*Deus vult*" meaning, "God wills." The Templars, in some cases, uttered the same words, but mostly the brief prayer for God's aid and supplication was "*da pacem Domine*," which when translated into English means "Give peace O Lord." (based on the Biblical verses: 2 Kings 20:19; 2 Chronicles 20:12,15; and Psalms 72:6-7.)

A book published in the year 1874, *The Freemason*, gives us some insight into the actual *Prayer of Thanksgiving* of our ancient Knights circa the year A.D. 1307, just before the martyrdom of Jacques de Molay in the year 1314. The following is an anglicized version:

"Mid the battle of life may true men always feel....If we will always stand by each other, we shall gain. In the Name of the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ who lives and reigns with you, and the Holy Spirit. One world without end. Amen."

As Christians, we Masonic Templars are encouraged by the order to participate in the activities of local churches of our choice. As an organization, each Commandery is required to participate in Christmas, Easter, and Ascension services. Commanderies also assist in providing funeral services when requested and prayers for departed Sir Knights. In Texas, the noted pioneer Brother and Sir Knight Adolphus Sterne, K.T., who was also an early member of Scottish Rite



Freemasonry, believed that Templary was an illumination of the principles of Ancient Craft Masonry.

Patriotism is another hallmark of Masonic Templars. When requested, Commanderies perform United States and individual state flag presentations as honor guards at community and at Masonic events and sponsor patriotic programs in their communities. Templars also act as escorts in funeral corteges and act as honor guards, standing in honor of deceased Sir Knights at the four points of their coffin during funerals, as well as at Memorial Day ceremonies. Templary extols the virtue of citizenship and encourages its members to be active in their communities. Let us all express as much prayer with a spirit of

thankfulness after an event occurs, as we do before an event happens. Just as in the commemorative plate, the ancient Knight has his sword in the air as well as his shield as he looks to the heavens in thanksgiving. Even his horse has its head bowed. Perhaps the creator of the plate intended that scene as a combination of joyous victory combined with magnanimous and reverent serenity.

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.

Sources and Recommended Readings

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- Webpage: <https://www.christianity.com/bible/the-christian-grace-of-thankfulness-colossians-3-15-11596158.html>
- Exhibit: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania s , Allegheny Commandery 35 commemorative plate, with the motto: "Offering of Prayer after the Battle."
- *Mackey s Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and Its Kindred Sciences*, Dr. Albert G. Mackey, M.D, 33º, and K.T. Keyword: Prayer .
- The Laudable Pursuit Published: September 2015.
- webpage: <http://www.thelaudablepursuit.com/articles/2015/9/4/may-brotherly-love-prevail-and-every-moral-and-social-virtue-cement-us>
- "Prayers and Patriotism among Knights Templar"
- webpage: Dallas Commandery 6 The Masonic Knights Templar
- *The Freemason and Masonic Illustrated: A Weekly Record of Progress*. Volume 7. Published Year 1874. Entitled: "Masonic Notes and Queries from The National Great Priory, of the United Religious, Military and Masonic Order of the Temple and of Saint John of Jerusalem, Palestine, Rhodes, and Malta of England and Wales and Its Provinces Overseas."

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/>.

Before King Solomon's Temple

By
Sir Knight Fred M. Duncan

Imagine, if you will, Jerusalem three months before construction started on King Solomon's Temple. Jerusalem would have been inundated with 153,000 workers arriving to build the Temple. Can you imagine how your town of 2,000 would handle such an influx of workers?

What was the source of water, how was sanitation handled, how were the workers housed, what foods existed before the 153,000 workers came to construct King Solomon's Temple, and was the food supply adequate to feed the Temple workers in addition to the residents? Archaeologist Hillel Geva of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem conservatively estimates Jerusalem's population near 2,000 prior to the building of King Solomon's Temple. The population of Jerusalem at the end of the eighth century BC, according to Geva, was 8,000.

The earliest traces of human settlement in what became Jerusalem date from the late Chalcolithic Period or early Bronze Age. The city was known as Urusa-

lim meaning "foundation of Shalem." According to Biblical accounts, Jerusalem was inhabited by a mix of peoples described as Jebusites. During the first Bronze Age the settlement evolved into Israelites via the development of a distinct Yahweh-centric monotheistic belief system. Jerusalem, one of the oldest cities in the world, has a very active history, having been destroyed twice, besieged twenty-three times, captured and recaptured forty-four times, and attacked fifty-two times.

Jerusalem, captured by David, became the capitol of the Jewish kingdom. David captured the fortress of Mount Zion¹ and named it the City of David to distinguish it from Jerusalem generally.² David built his temple on the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite where God stopped Abraham from sacrificing his son, Isaac. David's reign in Jerusalem lasted thirty-two years. By the time Solomon was anointed King, Jerusalem was a city of crowded, narrow streets with spacious quarters for royal palaces and court retinue.



The Temple Mount in Jarusalem, said to be the site of King Solomon's Temple.
Photo by the editor.

David was forbidden to build the temple. God told David, “you have shed so much blood and have waged great so many wars you shall not build a house to my name.”³ The Lord chose Solomon to build his “house.” Solomon started building the Temple in 950 BC and finished it in the eleventh year, in the month of Bul (the eighth month). The house was finished throughout all the parts thereof and according to all the fashion of it. The Temple was a monument to God and a permanent home for the Ark of the Covenant containing the *Ten Commandments* Moses brought down from Mount Sinai.

Settlements obtained water via tunnels tapped into area water sources. Access to a water supply had to be insured, as enemy invaders would cut off a city’s water during sieges. Jerusalem’s water supply, consisting of hidden wells, underground cisterns, and drainage, was developed in stages prior to the reign of King David in 1055 B.C. Depending on the season, Gihon spring would supply water to the city once or twice a day for a thirty to forty minute period. Gihon Spring’s water was also used to irrigate surrounding fields and gardens through several open canals along the Kidron riverbed. King Solomon’s Temple had water on all floors via an Archimedes screw, a displacement pump using a hydraulic engineering technique to lift water above ground level.

Ancient Hebrews are among the earliest people to incorporate cleanliness and hygiene into their religious observance and everyday life. Some attribute this to Moses’ upbringing in an Egyptian royal household. Washing, bathing, and cleanliness played a prominent role in the religious rites of Jews and indirectly

afforded the people a greater measure of health than was enjoyed by most ancient societies. The earliest recorded sanitary laws concerning disposal of human waste were also attributed to Moses and his teachings. Moses instructed his people to dispose of their waste away from camp and to use a spade to turn the remains under earth or sand. In crowded cities, drains were built for removing sewage from homes and streets. Excess waste and refuse was carted out through the appropriately named “Dung Gate” of the city.

Era animals were sheep, goats, cattle, horses, donkeys, camels, mules, deer, gazelles, geese, pigeons, and roebucks. Mules, cattle, camels, and donkeys were beasts of burden; goats provided milk, meat, and hair for weaving. Pigeons supplied meat and were sacrificial animals. Sheep provided wool for weaving and meat. Hides made clothing, water carriers, and scrolls.

Non meats were wheat, barley, fruit of vines, figs, pomegranates, olive oil, honey, garlic, onions, eggs of wild fowl, milk, cheese, and butter.^{4,5} It was customary to eat twice a day, with a morning meal of bread dipped in olive oil or wine, vinegar, toasted wheat, olives, figs or some other fruit, and water or diluted wine. The evening meal was usually a common pot of broth or soup, seasoned with legumes. Bread was made from wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, and emmer.⁷ King Solomon’s daily menu included thirty kors (bushels) of semolina, sixty kors of flour, ten fattened oxen, twenty pasture fed oxen, one hundred sheep, and goats, as well as deer, gazelles, roebucks, fish, and fatted geese.⁸

Ancient Israel started as small nomadic groups of people living in rudi-

mentary shelter but quickly evolved into a nation of complex fortified cities. Fortified cities were built to house common people and royals and to provide protection from enemy nations. Tel Megiddo is an example. Though Solomon's principal palace was in Jerusalem, Tel Megiddo contained a palace for the king and other royals while in the city, housing for citizens, lodging for visitors, and a barracks for soldiers. The barracks provided

housing and storage for weapons, armor and other equipment. One of the largest features of Tel Megiddo were stables which housed 492 battle horses. For the horsemen readers, Solomon's kingdom had forty thousand stalls for horses and twelve thousand horsemen.⁹

Sir Knight Fred M. Duncan is a member of Coer De Lion 1 Pensacola, Florida and can be reached at harmonyblu62@yahoo.com.



The ruins of Tel Megiddo overlooking the plain of Jezreel, said to have been a fortress and palace of King Solomon. Photo by the editor.

Notes

1. 1 Chronicles 11: 7
2. 1 Kings 3:1, 8:1
3. 1 Chronicles 22:8
4. Deuteronomy 8:8
5. 1 Samuel 17:18
6. Ruth 2:14
7. Ezekiel 4:9
8. 1 Kings 5:2-3
9. 1 Kings 4:26
10. Hillel Geva, an archaeologist, has worked on some of the most important archaeological excavations in Jerusalem since 1967 and is editor of the leading Hebrew journal on biblical archaeology.

Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.

The EyeCare America Option

We write extensively about research and education as the primary mission of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation (KTEF), but there is a patient care option available for those who qualify through EyeCare America, a program of the American Academy of Ophthalmology and co-sponsored by the KTEF.

Eye care is available at no cost for those who qualify through a network of 5,000 volunteer ophthalmologists nationwide. Eligibility is determined by the Online Referral Center at www.aao.org/eyecareamerica (2020 KTEF Information Booklet, p. 16).

Two programs are offered; one is the Senior Program for those sixty-five and older who meet the eligibility guidelines and have not seen an ophthalmologist in three or more years.

The Glaucoma Program is for United States citizens or legal residents who do not belong to an HMO or have vision benefits through the Veterans Administration, have not had an eye exam for twelve months or more, and are at an increased risk for glaucoma (Informational Booklet, p. 16).

By age sixty-five, one in three Americans will suffer from a form of vision-impairing eye disease, and nearly three million people of all ages have glaucoma.

The EyeCare America program has a long history of helping those with vision problems. Since 1985, ophthalmologists (medical eye doctors), through EyeCare America, have assisted more than two million patients, and ninety percent of the care is provided at no out-of-pocket cost to the patient (Informational Booklet, p. 16). According to the AAO Eye Care America website, they are recommended by AARP and *Reader's Digest*, among others.

Some services are not covered; including hospitals, surgical facilities, medications, and eye glasses. Patients concerned about these costs should talk to the doctor prior to their examination or visit the resources page on the AAO EyeCare America website (Informational Booklet, p. 17).

Supporting access to care is one of the three primary missions of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation. Though the emphasis for many years has focused on research and education, and rightfully so, it is nice to know there is still a direct patient care option available for those who qualify. You can read more about EyeCare America at www.ktef.org/eyecare-america.



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

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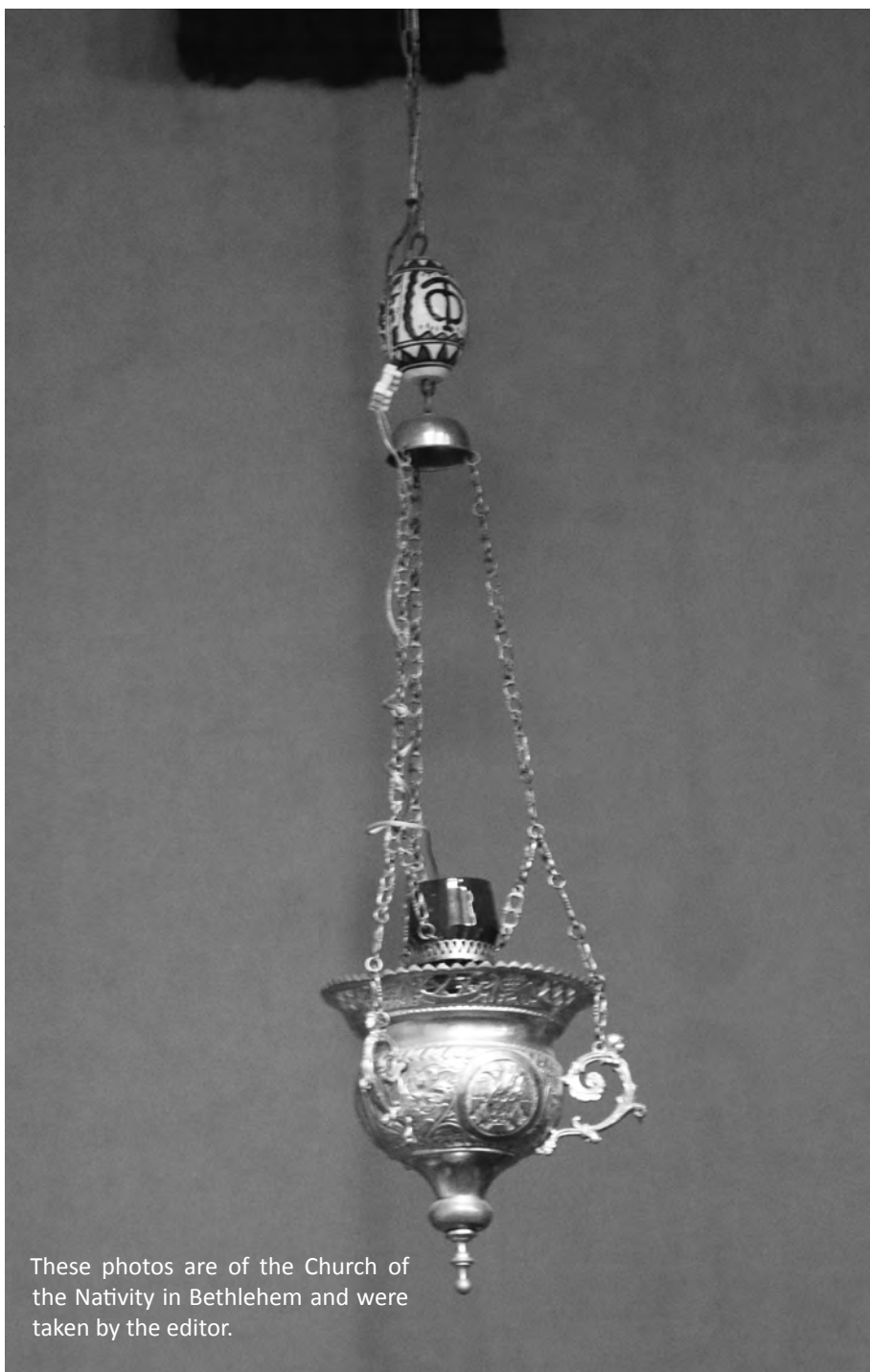
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General Supplement

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.





These photos are of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and were taken 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

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Constantine the Great Soldier, Emperor, and Saint

By
Sir Knight John R. Dinkle

The Masonic and Military Order of the Red Cross of Constantine and Appendant Orders is an honorary and invitational Masonic body, membership in which is generally considered the highest perceived honor conferred by the York Rite system as practiced in the United States. The first Conclave of the order in the United States was established in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, by Division Inspector General Alfred Creigh on December 14, 1870, via Canada by order of the Sovereign Grand Conclave of England and, in honor of this status, was appropriately named United States Premiere Conclave.¹

The historical back-story of Constantine the Great, soldier, emperor, orthodox Catholic saint, and patron of the order is one of continuous military victory, stability in leadership, and administrative genius that shines down the corridors of time even to our present day. During his thirty year reign (306-337 AD), ruling first the western and then the combined halves of the Roman Empire, Constantine championed political, civil, and administrative innovations, the results of which can still be recognized today, seventeen centuries after his death.

Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantinus Augustus, (called Constantine I or Constantine the Great) was born the son of a Roman army officer on February 27, 272 AD in the town of Niassus in today's Serbia. His father, Flavius Valerius Constantius, was himself appointed Constantius I, Caesar

in the West, in consequence of the Emperor Diocletian's edict of 284 AD which split the Roman Empire into two parts, East and West. Diocletian believed that the empire had grown too large and unwieldy for one man to govern effectively. Constantine, serving at his father's side, proved to be an able soldier and respected leader, so much so that he was acclaimed as Caesar in the West by the Roman Legions under his command upon the death of his father in 306 AD. The Roman Senate, being faced with this fait accompli backed by the Legions, had little choice but to acquiesce.

The long civil war which then followed resulted in a series of battles against the remaining Caesars, in which Constantine was completely victorious. He was declared the sole Roman Emperor in 324 AD, reuniting both the eastern and western empires that Diocletian had deemed too far flung for a single emperor to govern. Constantine resolved this perception by adding a second administrative capital, a solution that would have great consequences for the Western Empire as well as our own time.

Constantine selected the old city of Byzantium in the province of Syria (now Turkey) as the second capital city, unofficially dubbed "New Rome." He rebuilt and beautified the city and re-dedicated it on May 11, 330, renaming it Constantinopolis, the "City of Constantine," or Constantinople in English. Here he would spend much of his reign, while institut-

ing a secondary Roman Senate along with a great imperial library, far from the infighting and intrigues of Rome and far from the difficult to defend old imperial capital. Constantine knew first-hand of the threat posed by the barbarian tribes against the empire and was determined to make his namesake capital as militarily defensible and economically self-sufficient as possible.

Constantinople was situated on a promontory, surrounded by water on three sides on the Bosphorus strait between the Mediterranean and Black Seas. Any land-based enemy army would by necessity be forced to attack the city from only one direction, the east. Constantine well knew that the Roman navy would successfully defend the water approaches to his city, allowing him to concentrate on improving the land defenses by using his military experience and skills so hard won at his father's side. In time, Constantinople would come to be considered completely impregnable.

Although quite an able administrator and endowed with great foresight, Constantine was perhaps most of all a pragmatist, always guided more by practical considerations than by tradition. He reorganized the Roman army into mobile field units as well as garrison soldiers, capable of countering both internal threats and barbarian invasions wherever they might develop within the empire. Like his father, Constantine preferred to promote people to higher office through merit rather than simply because of wealth or social standing. He was always acutely aware of his own plebeian ancestry and understood that although respected by the people, he would never truly be accepted by the patricians of Rome. This realization

shaped his policies and priorities, politically, religiously, and personally for the remainder of his life.

One of the most important and far-reaching of Constantine's achievements as emperor was the *Edict of Milan* in 313 AD, in which he proclaimed complete freedom of religious worship throughout the Roman Empire. Constantine understood that the pantheon of twelve Roman gods and goddesses was only one of the empire's many religions, often worshipped half-heartedly at best. Conversely, those who followed the Christian religion in Rome and throughout the east proved dynamic and growing, despite the persecutions they had endured under previous emperors. Constantine knew that to successfully hold onto power he needed the support of the Roman people, and to that end, pragmatically declared this assurance of full freedom of religious worship within the empire. He also supported the nascent Christian church financially, declared the "basilica" as the proper form for Christian churches, granted privileges to clergy, exempted church properties from certain taxes, promoted Christians into high office, and returned property confiscated from Christians during the past periods of Roman persecution. He also abolished crucifixion as a form of Roman capital punishment.

On March 7, 321 AD, Constantine issued a decree making Sunday a day of rest and worship all across the Roman Empire, even for those who were not Christians. This *Sunday Rest Law* separated the Christian Sunday day of rest from the Jewish Saturday Sabbath and was Constantine's way of continuing the codification of the Christian calendar, moving it further away from its Jewish



Image of Constantine the Great from a public display in the Capitoline Museum in Rome, Italy.

roots. The ghost of this decree can be found in the history of the *Blue Laws* of the United States that once prevented most businesses from being open on Sunday, the day of rest.

In 325 AD, Constantine organized the first ecumenical council for the fledgling Christian Church. The council was held between May and August of that year in Nicaea, in today's Turkey, as a first step toward a theological consensus among the several factions of the early church, and it resulted in what we know today as the *Nicene Creed*, the first uniform declaration of the Christian faith and principles. The Council also set the time of the Easter celebration in the ecclesiastical calendar, which separated this date for the first time from the Jewish calendar and its Jewish Passover origins.

Prior to the Nicene Council, Constantine's mother, Helena, now known as St. Helena of the Byzantine Catholic Church, was sent by her son to the Holy Land to search for the tomb of Jesus Christ. In knight templar

this she is believed to have been successful, finding what was purported to be the true cross of Christ as well as the empty burial place of the Savior. Constantine decreed and funded a church built on the exact location, and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher (after having been rebuilt several times) still exists there to the present day. In 327 AD Constantine and Helena also commissioned the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem to commemorate the birthplace of Jesus. This basilica was completed and consecrated on September 12, 335 AD.

During the third century, Rome had endured runaway inflation associated with the production of fiat money to pay for public expenses, despite the Emperor Diocletian's unsuccessful attempt to re-establish the trustworthy minting of gold and silver bullion coins. To combat this inflation, Constantine introduced a new coin called the gold "solidus" which replaced the Roman "aureus" as the standard for Byzantine and European currencies for more than a thousand years. It is from this coin that we have our concept of the "gold standard," meaning the best and most reliable thing of its type.

To commemorate his victory over the tyrant Maxentius at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, Constantine was honored by the Roman Senate with a triumphal arch, the Arch of Constantine, which still exists today. At sixty-nine feet high, eighty-five feet wide, and twenty-four feet deep, this arch is the largest of the three surviving Roman triumphal arches and is the last of the great monuments of Imperial Rome. This magnificent arch has survived the ravages of time nearly undamaged and was the inspiration for many modern-day arches and buildings,

such as the Arc de Triomphe in Paris, France, the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, Germany, and part of the American Museum of Natural History in New York City.

Although Constantine would be considered the first Christian emperor for his acceptance of Christian freedom of worship, Christianity would not become the official religion of the Empire until the *Edict of Thessalonica* on February 27, 380 AD, forty-three years after Constantine's death. His biography, *The Life of Constantine*, probably authored by the Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea, suggests that Constantine, pragmatic to the end, only allowed himself to be baptized as a Christian on his deathbed to guarantee he would enter into heaven with an unblemished soul, free from the sins of his long and perhaps less than holy life.

After Constantine's death in 337 AD, his sons reigned as emperors in his place, introducing the principle of dynastic succession to the Roman Empire. However, in the same way that King Solomon's sons were unable to keep the throne of Israel intact, Constantine's sons fought

over the rights of succession. After the death of his son Constantius II in 361 AD, Constantine's direct line was extinguished. The Roman Empire was again split in two in 395 AD upon the death of Theodosius I, Roman emperor in Constantinople, never again to be made whole. The age of Constantine was over.

The reign of Constantine marked a distinct epoch in the history of the Roman Empire. His capital city of Constantinople, increasingly well-developed and well-fortified, mirrored the rest of his eastern empire. Unfortunately, this greater strength of the East prompted aggressors to turn their attention toward the West and to Rome itself. The great imperial city along with the western Roman empire, fell in 476 AD to the Germanic barbarian leader Flavius Odoacer, but Constantinople, the city of Constantine the Great, would continue to glitter as a bastion of Greek and Roman science and learning for another thousand years, while Europe and the old western empire descended into the Dark Ages. Not until 1453 AD would Constantinople be



Modern day Istanbul, Turkey, formerly Constantinople, named for Constantine the Great. Photos by the editor.



captured after a fifty-three day siege by the Muslim Ottoman Turks, ultimately de-Christianized, and subsequently re-named Istanbul.

Without Constantine the Great, would Christianity have become so powerful and influential in the world? Perhaps, for God works in mysterious ways, but Constantine was the agent of change that helped turn the years of persecution into years of peace for the fledgling Christian movement, leading Christianity to become the state religion of the Roman Empire and ultimately the largest religion in the world today.

The Chi Rho is a Christogram formed from the first two Greek letters of the word "Christ" (ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ) and was first used by Constantine the Great. The Chi Rho is considered to be the symbol Constantine observed in the vision given to him just before the battle of Milvian Bridge on the Tiber on October 28, 312 AD, and which he caused to be added to



the shields and standards of his army. It was then adopted as his personal vexillum or military standard after his victory over Maxentius and thus is also known as the Labarum of Constantine.

Constantine the Great, for which the Masonic and Military Order of the Red Cross of Constantine was named, was buried in his city of Constantinople in the Church of the Holy Apostles, a basilica he had funded and built, and he shares an Orthodox Catholic Saint's Day with St. Helena, his mother, on May 21st. He is venerated as the patron saint of converts to the Christian faith in the Orthodox Catholic Church.

Sir Knight John R. Dinkel is a past commander of Beaver Valley Commandery 84 in Bridgewater, Pennsylvania, and can be contacted at jdcommander@comcast.net.

End Notes

1. “Ne Plus Ultra”, an article in *The Philaethes*, the journal of the Philaethes Society, published in December, 2007.
2. Barry Strauss, *Ten Caesars*; (New York, Simon & Shuster), 2019, pages 287-320.
3. Aurelius Victor, *De Caesaribus*, 41:4
4. Fiat currency is legal tender whose value is backed by the government that issued it, as opposed to money whose value is underpinned by some physical good such as gold or silver, called commodity money. U.S. dollars and Euros are fiat money.
5. Latin for “solid.”
6. In 1923 upon the collapse of the Otterman Empire.
7. Christian 31%, Islam 24%, Hindu 15%, Buddhism 7%, Judaism <1%, Other (including non-religious and atheist) 23%; PEW report. 2015.
8. . Werner DeSaeger, *Constantine - Pocket Giants*; (Gloucestershire, UK; The History Press), 2016.

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Leadership Notes

The York Rite Leadership Program

It has been a pleasure to write the Leadership Notes article for the past year. I hope I have imparted some nugget that you have put into practice in your Lodge, Chapter, Council, and Commandery that has improved the Masonic experience for you and the brothers. In 2021, the talented Instructors of this program will be joining me in contributing to this article. It is my privilege to introduce each of them.

Harry Jenkins and Adam Hathaway are the primary Instructors for “YRL101 – Principles of Individual Leadership.” Brother Hathaway is a past grand master of New Mexico. Besides being a leader in many Masonic organizations, he is also an accomplished presenter and trainer. Brother Jenkins is also from New Mexico. He is a professional trainer of those that protect our country. He brings a no-nonsense, let’s get it done, attitude to his classes that inspires others to action.

The YRL101 class discusses the personal traits and qualities of a leader and of those he or she may lead. It sets the foundation for building your skills as a leader. This class will help you with assessing your current leadership skill set and abilities while teaching some principals of Leadership from Covey, Maxwell, Tracey, and others. Upon completing the class, you are expected to put into practice what you have learned to be a more effective personal leader.

Charles O’Neil and Steve Balke are the primary Instructors for “YRL201 – Group Dynamics of Leadership.” Brother O’Neil is a past grand commander of Connecticut. He is vice president of client operations for a company that produces radiology software, and Brother O’Neil has a BA in education. Brother Balke is the general grand recorder of Cryptic Masons International. As the owner of Studio Balke, he provides business and technology consultation and training. Brother Balke is the principal architect behind the YRL Website.

In the YRL201 class, you will learn how groups develop social identities that lead to better outcomes. You will also learn the nuances of working with and motivating volunteer groups. Building teams and creating an atmosphere where team members desire to accomplish their objectives is a signature of well-formed leadership. It is a special skill to be an effective leader of such groups, because you must lead from a place of optimism and growth.

Then there is me, Lane Pierce. I am the developer of the third class designated “YRL401 – Influential Communications.” I am a master trainer of neurolinguistic programming, an accomplished toastmaster, and your humble servant. It is my privilege to lead such a great team of talented Instructors.

The capstone of this program is YRL401. Here you will learn how the human mind

processes language and how to use those processes to communicate more effectively and with greater influence. When you understand how people process language, you can construct your language to create the communication you desire and motivate your organization to being better than ever.

Over the course of this next year, we will continue to produce executive-class leadership training, be it virtual or in-person training. Each of the instructors will be contributing to this article throughout the year so that you might get a greater exposure to the team. You should also expect our online system to become more robust with automated notifications of classes and the ability to manage your own profile.

Remember my fraters, this program can only improve our fraternity if you learn and apply the knowledge. If you have sat on the sidelines and wondered how to make your meetings better and how to improve membership, maybe this program is for you.

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



68th TRIENNIAL CONCLAVE ANNOUNCEMENT



The 68th Triennial Conclave will be held in Minneapolis, Minnesota, from Saturday, August 14, through Wednesday, August 18, 2021. The venue will be the Marriott Minneapolis City Center. The Sir Knights of North Dakota and Minnesota are looking forward to welcoming you and your families to the “City of Lakes.” Minneapolis is the 16th largest metropolitan area in the United States, and there are plenty of activities for you and your family, from sports (the Minnesota Twins), arts (fifty-five museums), and shopping (from small boutiques to the Mall of America). The Marriott Minneapolis City Center is located downtown within easy walking distance of the Nicollet Avenue pedestrian mall and numerous restaurants. There is something for every interest.

The conclave will begin with the drill competition on Saturday, August 14. We know that many drill teams are anticipating this competition. We are also aware that drill practices are restricted as of this writing and sincerely hope that situation will be remedied soon so that teams may prepare to participate. We encourage you and your team to participate if you can do so in a safe manner. The divine service and Grand Master’s Reception will be Sunday morning and evening, respectively, on August 15. The public opening will be Monday morning, August 16, followed by the first (tiled) business session Monday afternoon. State dinners may be arranged for Monday evening. The business sessions continue Tuesday, August 17, with the Grand Master’s Banquet that evening. The installation of officers for the 69th triennium will occur on Wednesday, August 18. Registration details will appear in subsequent issues of the *Knight Templar* magazine and will be posted on the Grand Encampment website soon.

One important piece of business that will be considered during the 68th Triennial Conclave will be the legislative package being drafted by the Preserving Templary 2021 Committee. This is your opportunity to shape the future of the Grand Encampment. Please forward your suggestions to the committee so that they may be considered. This is an exciting time for the Grand Encampment and Templary as we move forward together.

68th TRIENNIAL CONCLAVE

OFFICIAL SOUVENIR PROGRAM BOOK

VENDORS AND DISPLAYS

The 68th Triennial Conclave of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar is coming soon. The Triennial Conclave Committee is working diligently to make this an enjoyable event.

By participating in the official souvenir program book, you become a permanent part of the conclave. The book features a greeting from the grand master, a schedule of events, some information regarding Minneapolis, as well as the congratulations and best wishes of numerous persons, entities, and advertisers who contribute to this special keepsake. Those who wish to contribute should send camera ready material, including high resolutions photos or graphics to:

Michael Powles
6555 Riverwood Lane, Brooklyn Center, MN 55430-1645
mcpowles@comcast.net / 612-669-2930

Pricing for inclusion in the book is as follows, subject to space availability. All material must be deemed acceptable by the Triennial Committee.

Inside front or back cover \$250

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Checks and money orders (in US dollars) should be made payable to the 68th Triennial, LLC and must be received by July 1, 2021.

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VENDOR AND DISPLAY AREA

Those wishing table space in a reserved area for vendors and display may reserve tables at the rate of \$30 each for Saturday through Tuesday. Please reserve your space by contacting Michael Powles at:

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Beauceant News

On November 12, 1920, the Supreme Assembly of the Social Order of the Beauceant was officially chartered. One hundred years later, our supreme worthy president, (Mrs. Carl W.) Yvonne Wunsche, encouraged us to celebrate Beauceant by wearing red, having a social distancing lunch or dinner with our sisters, and sharing your photos. Congratulations, my sisters on achieving 100 years of faith, loyalty and love!





Please remember to submit photographs and articles about what your assembly is doing to (Mrs. Dean) Edie Rein, PSWP at swp2018@gmail.com by the first of each month.



Knights



at the Bookshelf

By

Sir Knight George L. Marshall, Jr., P.G.C., KGT

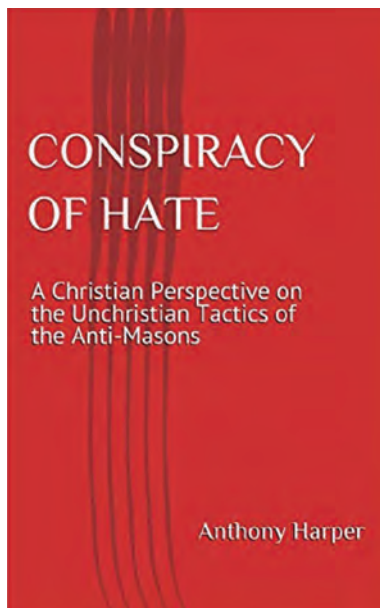
Anthony Harper, *Conspiracy of Hate: A Christian Perspective on the Unchristian Tactics of the Anti-Masons*, Softbound, Self-published, Second Printing, Monee, IL, 2020, 159 pages, ISBN:979-8-6300-5588-0.

This is the second printing of this book, the first being in 1995. The author is a Wisconsin Mason who belongs to both the York and Scottish Rites and is a member of several Masonic appendant bodies. The book, while interesting enough in its own right in several instances, does labor under some rather serious defects. Among which are: there are no page numbers; there are grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors in various places; some of the material is dated or no longer valid; and the title is somewhat misleading.

The primary issue I had with the book is its scope—it simply tries to cover too much ground in too little space. Chapters 1 and 2: “Myths, Misconceptions and Outright Lies,” and “Analysis of Anti-Masonic Authors,” respectively, are certainly in keeping with the book’s title, but the remaining chapters and appendices go far afield from the title, covering such topics as: “Fraternal Groups in American History;” “Famous Freemasons of Yesterday and Today;” “Masonic Charities, A Tradition of Giving;” and “The Structure of Modern Masonry.” Much of what the author states was valid twenty-five years ago, but much has changed since 1995.

In the interests of brevity, I will confine my review to the first two chapters. Chapter 1 presents a panorama of charges against the fraternity frequently used by anti-Masonic writers, such as: being a secret society, satanism, taking oaths, racism, and witchcraft. He carefully explains why Masonry does not practice or is not involved in the alleged charge, from a Christian and Biblical point of view. Chapter 2 presents brief accounts of some well-known modern anti-Masonic au-

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thors and some not so well known. The author cites some of their statements and then invokes scripture and common sense in an effort to refute them. In many cases the author actually tried to contact these anti-Masonic writers but, not unexpectedly, met with little success in getting a reply.

The book has some good information and material in it, especially in some of the appendices, but in this reviewer's opinion, its purpose would have been better served if it had been reprinted in a revised and updated edition, possibly with a more appropriate title to better reflect its contents and not released simply as a reprint of a twenty-five year old work.

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.

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