

# Knight Templar

VOLUME LXVIII

April 2022

NUMBER 4



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# Knight Templar

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# Grand Master's Message

**A**s we entered this new triennium, the officers of the Grand Encampment spent considerable time deciding the pros and cons of having three Easter Observances. We finally came to the conclusion that we need to go back to just one Easter Observance and celebrate it at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial.

The West Coast Easter Observance was started in Los Angeles in April of 2011 by Grand Master Koon. It continued with different venues in the West including Denver, Phoenix, and Salt Lake City. What we as Grand Encampment Officers did not realize at the time was that many of the Western Grand Commanderies had their own Easter Observances which they had celebrated for many years. They were not willing to

set aside their observances to join the Grand Encampment's West Coast Easter Observance. We tried another Easter observance in the Midwest in Kansas City, which never got much traction either. The Grand Encampment officers put forward a good faith effort to establish Easter Observances throughout our country for ten years, but this did not gather the enthusiasm and support that we had hoped for.

The 92<sup>nd</sup> Annual Grand Encampment Easter Observance will be held again on the steps of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in Alexandria, Virginia on Easter Sunday, April 17, 2022. I give credit and many thanks to Sir Knight Michael Kastle and his committee for all the hard work that is required to produce this event. We are also thankful for grand recorder Sir Knight Larry Tucker and his staff for all the work they do to see that the Easter Observance is successful.

Easter is a special time of year for our Christian faith and the orders we take to become Knights Templar. Easter is the fulfillment of the promise that when a man dies, he is to rise in glory forever to live in the many mansions in God's Kingdom. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ's resurrection is but a divine assurance that we as mortals can have immortality. One of my favorite passages in the *Bible* is in Psalms 62:6-7; it says, "...only in God be at rest, my soul, for from him comes my hope. He only is my rock and salvation."

We hope you will all come to the Grand Encampment's Easter Observance in Alexandria, Virginia. My lady, Judy, and I, along with the Grand Encampment officers, wish each of you a most blessed Easter.

May God bless you all and your families.

Michael B. Johnson, grand master



## ***Knight Templar Magazine Available on Your Smart Phone***

The *Knight Templar* magazine is now available on your smart phone including your state supplement. 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/>.

### IN MEMORIAM



John Robert Clime  
OHIO

Grand Commander 2010  
Born: December 19, 1950  
Died: January 23, 2022

Gregory Lee Andersen  
IOWA

Grand Commander 2012  
Born: May 22, 1962  
Died: July 12, 2022

William Jackson Jones  
ILLINOIS  
Grand Commander 1984  
Born: March 12, 1939  
Died: January 31, 2022  
Most Eminent Past Grand Master  
2000-2003

# Prelate's Chapel

by

Reverend Terry L. Plemons

right eminent grand prelate of the Grand Encampment

Colossians 3:17 - "Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father."



**H**is earthly name is Jesus, but He is also, in the most profound expression of his name, referred to as the Lord Jesus Christ.

The angel appeared unto Mary saying "and behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. Jesus is derived from the Hebrew *Yeshua* or *Y'shua* meaning, to deliver, "for He will save His people from their sins."

Christ is the office He held, the Greek translation of the Hebrew word *Messiah*, *the anointed one*, chosen by God to fulfill the offices of prophet, priest, and king. The entire *Old Testament* is written in anticipation of "the one to come;" the *New Testament* is written of the one who will return. He came first as Savior. He is returning as the Righteous King and Judge of all things.

What does Lordship mean, simply put? Everything! Obedience, sacrifice, walking by faith, trusting, forgiveness, charity, truth, rejoicing always in the name of the Lord.

He calls us to a righteous walk, to practice charity, to love one another. John the Baptist declared, "I must decrease and He must increase."

The title Lord associated with Jesus identifies his divinity. The dove descended and God declared "this is My Son in whom I am well pleased." As God was pleased with His Son, is the Lord Jesus pleased with us?

Let us daily guard our hearts, our tongues, and our walk before Jesus. Either Jesus is Lord or he is not; he can't just be Lord on convenient occasions. A faithful walk requires us to be intentional. (Philippians 4:13) "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me." My confidence does not rest in the frailty of my decisions but in the grace and mercy of the Lord Jesus.

I love each and everyone one of you, and there is not a thing you can do to change it.

Terry Plemons,  
grand prelate

# The Templar Rule Today

By  
Sir Knight Andrea Marocchi  
Part 1 of 3

Templar history is shrouded in legend, obfuscated by unending controversy. Questions persist. Chief among them is the motives of the king of France and of the pope of Avignon in disbanding the order.

These questions remain subject to conjecture. In contemplating them here, I would like to first remember Archbishop Rinaldo da Concorezzo,<sup>1</sup> the brave and righteous man who had the courage to acquit the Knights sent to him for trial<sup>2</sup> and who was beatified by Pope Pius, IX on August 18, 1852.

We must also consider the worldview of our medieval predecessors. Dante Alighieri had a guide who led him to the higher spheres of Heaven,<sup>3</sup> Saint Bernard de Clairvaux, and we, too, will follow him.<sup>4</sup>

Saint Bernard de Clairvaux wrote *De Laude Novae Militiae* (In Praise of the

*New Knighthood*), wherein he explained the principles of a new monastic order, The Poor Knights of Christ and the Temple of Solomon.

According to scholars, Bernard also wrote the first version of the *Templar Rule*, the protocol that governed the Templars' lives. If we are to be Knights Templar, then the teachings of these parchments should govern our lives, too. The documents were written in Latin, and since few Knights were familiar with Latin, they were translated into medieval French to be more easily explained to the new Brothers.

Saint Bernard's instructions are not just moral or spiritual. His words regard many practical matters, but today, how many of us own a warhorse, and who has fought his enemies in armor, with sword in hand?

Today, we live in a different world, but



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division between politics and religion. God was the fundament of society and the justification for political power in the Christian and in the Islamic worlds. It wasn't until the seventeenth century that Roger Williams,<sup>6</sup> founder of the first Baptist church in America, popularized the principle of a separation of church and state, a fundamental tenet of any modern democracy.

The Battle of Poitiers,<sup>7</sup> in October of 732, called the "Battle of the Highway of the Martyrs" by the Arabian chroniclers, arrested Islamic expansion into the Frankish kingdoms in modern day France, but Muslim armies were still overwhelming parts of Europe. Spain, except for the northern area close to the mountains, was still under Muslim rule. Southern France was ravaged by Arabian armies, with many strongholds in the the South of France; Sicily was not conquered by the Crescent until 999 AD, and even Rome, in its suburban estates, had been sacked twice.

One hundred years before the First Crusade, Arabian raiders breached the snowline in the Alps, destroyed the old Noalesa monastery, and put the friars to the sword because they refused to convert to Islam.

From this perspective then, the promotion of the Crusade by St. Bernard can be seen as a defensive reaction to preserve Christendom, not an imperialistic move intent on conquest as some historians prefer today.

Islamic tradition, on the other side, contemplated military conquest to diffuse the "true religion of the believers." It did not accept that a land, once ruled by believers, could return to secular governance. Once risen, the crescent remained on the horizon.

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## The Catholic Church

In Christian Europe, the Catholic Church was essential to the governance of every state. In the fourth and fifth centuries, the western part of the Roman Empire had collapsed. Yet political power was still projected from Rome by way of the Church. Gradually, the Catholic Church assumed political as well as ecclesiastical power. In the East, where the Roman Empire had fractured less, the Orthodox Church remained under the authority of the Roman emperor. A line of allegiance divided Europe; East from West, spiritually and politically.

The relationship between western and eastern Christian churches was turbulent. History records the Acacian Schism in 484 AD, the Photian Schism in 863 AD, until the final great Schism in 1054 AD, which ended in mutual excommunication. In 1453 AD, when the emperor of Constantinople<sup>8</sup> tried to reconcile the Eastern and Western churches and proclaim the superiority of the pope in Rome in exchange for military support against the Turks, the people of Constantinople rioted. So it was that in 1454 AD, after a memorable siege, Mohammed, II entered the former Roman capital and took up the reins of power.

Across these centuries of fragmenting power and incursive statehood, the Catholic Church rose to temporal power in the West.

It would become the backbone and right hand of the European revival.

## The Warrior's Sin

In early Christianity, St Augustine's *bellum iustum*<sup>9</sup> (righteous war) was al-

ready accepted, but warfare was nonetheless not virtuous. A conundrum persisted: could those who killed, who didn't turn the other cheek, be saved? Could righteous war be reconciled with Christian teaching? After all, *Thou shalt not kill* was the Sixth Commandment, and Christ taught a doctrine of peace. Indeed, the Church venerated as holy martyrs the Roman Legionaries put to death because of their refusal to take up arms. The *Theban Legio* legend is a well-known example.<sup>10</sup> To kill was a sin, and warriors had to seek absolution to be restored to the Grace of God or else die in perdition.

In 1095, Pope Urban, II<sup>11</sup> arrived at the solution: absolve the Crusaders preemptively, before they went off to fight.

Armed with the infallible word of God, Urban's decision was dispositive. No Christian order could exist in contradiction to Christian teaching. Thus, Urban opened the door for Bernard to author his influential book: *De Laude Novae Militiae* (in praise of the new knighthood). In it, Bernard reconciled ultimate, offensive action as the necessary defense of goodness, even Christendom itself.

### ***Malicidium* or the Killing of Evil**

*Malicidium* is a Latin word, composed of *malum*, indicating a condition opposed to good, and *homicidium*, which means "murder." In English it is translated as "malicide."

Saint Bernard coined the term to define the killing of non-Christians in

war. If there is no other way to prevent his evil deed, malicide was sanctioned. Since such killing was the sole means to prevent and subjugate a prevailing evil, malicide could not conflict with the Sixth Commandment. Rather, in Bernard's reasoning, it was a necessary, even holy act, to preempt an absolute, irremediable evil.

To counterpoise malicide with righteousness and inspire holiness, Saint Bernard bade it unlawful to commit malicide unless the evil had first been killed in the Christian. For St. Bernard, righteous war required penitence and ascetism – a need to be without sin to become the vessel of judgment. With mind to the importance of free will in raising salvation, Bernard forbade force as a means of conversion to Christianity.

The rationale for malicide<sup>12</sup> is based on Biblical exegesis (e.g. Deut. 7: 12), constructing the *Old Testament* particularly as justifying righteous anger.

**To be continued in the May 2022 issue.**

Sir Knight Andrea Marocchi is a member of Palestine Commandery 11 in Rochester, New Hampshire and historian of Federal Lodge 5 in Dover, New Hampshire. He can be reached at [andrea.marocchi@gmail.com](mailto:andrea.marocchi@gmail.com).

**We publish articles from a variety of sources and points of view. The opinions expressed in these articles do not necessarily reflect the opinions or policy of the Grand Encampment, the *Knight Templar* magazine, or the Editorial Review Board.**

## Notes

1. Rainaldo da Concorreggio o Rainaldo da Concorezzo (1250-1321) was in charge of important diplomatic missions. During the Council of Vienne (1311-1312) he refused to bend his conscience to the king of France and later, as judge of the Northern Italy Knights Templar, during the Ravenna Council (17-21 June 1311), he refused to use torture and acquitted many innocent Knights. In 1340 he became Blessed Rainaldo for the Roman Catholic church. In 1566 he was exhumed and his body was found uncorrupted.
2. To acquit is not a synonym of absolve in the medieval Church language; the former implies that the person acquitted is not guilty, the latter that he is guilty, but his sins are remitted.
3. Dante Alighieri "Paradiso - Canto XXIII," the poet arrives at Empyrean and Saint Bernard became his guide in place of Beatrice.
4. Saint Bernard de Clairvaux (1090-1153) was a major influence in his time and a respected theologian; André de Montbard, one of the first nine Knights Templar was half-brother of Bernard's mother
5. This concept is explained by Dante Alighieri in his Epistula XIII to Cangrande della Scala and in "Convivio" - Tomo II
6. Roger Williams (1603- 1683) was a minister, theologian and author. He strenuously defended the liberty of religion. He moved to America in 1631.
7. The Battle of Poitiers, also the Battle of Tours, saw Charles Martel, greatly outnumbered, defeat the Muslim army. The Umayyad leader, Abdul Rahman Al Ghafiqi, was killed during the battle. Some historians cite this victory as saving Christendom from Islamic conquest.
8. Constantine XI Palaiologos, the last Emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire, begged Pope Nicholas V to send theologians to Constantinople to convince the people and clergy there to accept the union but most of the Greek priests, the monks, and the people opposed union with the "heretics" and "schismatics" in the West.
9. Saint Augustine in *De Civitate Dei* (4:15;19,7;19,15) - *Quaestiones in Heptateuchum*(4,44; 6,10) - *Contra Faustum Manichaeum* (22,74-75)
10. The earliest surviving document describing "the holy Martyrs who have made Agaunum illustrious with their blood" is a letter of Eucherius of Lyon (c. 380 – c. 449); *Codex Parisiensis*, Bibliothèque nationale, 9550,
11. Pope Urban II (Urbanus II; c. 1035 – 29 July 1099), in 1095 , promised forgiveness and pardon for all of the past sins of those who would fight to reclaim the holy land from Muslims and to those that would fight the Muslims in Spain. Fom Fulcher of Chartres account he said: "All who die by the way, whether by land or by sea, or in battle against the pagans, shall have immediate remission of sins. This I grant them through the power of God with which I am invested"
12. See Saint Bernard: *In Laude Novae Militiae* and "Letter CCCLXIII to the people and the clergy of Eastern France," where he makes clear his thinking.



**M**ost Eminent Grand Master Michael B. Johnson, has reiterated that “Membership” will continue to be his number one priority as we usher in this 69<sup>th</sup> triennium. Your Committee on Membership has taken on the charge to step up our efforts to build on the number of fraters in our cherished order. You can see above that, as a part of this challenge, we have a new logo. You see the salem cross surrounded by the Celtic knot which is to signify that, “as the celtic knot has no ending, we pray that this order will endure for all time, bringing peace to mankind. We hold ourselves to the highest standards by continuously setting the example of faith, hope, and charity as characterized in the symbolism of the salem cross.”

We have a new **Mission Statement**: “The GEKT Membership Committee will administer a campaign designed to achieve our membership goals by providing specific programs designated for recruitment, retention, and restoration.”

Our new **Vision Statement** reads: “We aim to make being a Knight Templar a life changing experience which entices prospective new members to join our ranks, motivates our current membership to a greater degree of participation, and encourages those who may have dropped out to renew their membership in the order.”

In the coming weeks, you will be able to use a new “Tool Box” found in the sub-site of the GEKT website under “Membership.” You will find many, many useful forms, suggested programs, and links that you can download and employ in your own membership programs. We are working to rearrange this site with the intent that the user should be able to reach the item he may be looking for in three or four keystrokes. This is an ambitious undertaking but a very necessary one that will enhance your efforts to grow our fraternity.

If we are to achieve greater numbers and a more participative membership, it is imperative that we set realistic goals for ourselves that are SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, and Timely). This goes down from each Grand Commandery to all of its constituent Commanderies. Each and every one of our Commanderies will be asked to do this, with all numbers being consolidated at your Grand Commandery level. You will be learning more about this in the upcoming Department Conferences and future articles in this magazine. Do not hesitate to reach out to your State Membership Committee Chairman or any one of the GEKT committee members:

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# Malta - A Short History

By

Sir Knight Michael J. Kastle, REPGC

Sometime ago, I attended a Commandery meeting that had a program on the Mediterranean Pass. Everything was very straight forward, right out of our ritual. Then the comment was made that all crusaders going to the Levant left from the island of Malta and received the Mediterranean Pass prior to leaving. I commented that not all Crusaders went by sea and those that did probably left from Genoa, Venice, Brindisi, and Aigues-Mortes for the later Crusades.

The island of Malta was not a major seaport until the early 16<sup>th</sup> Century, when the Knights of the Hospital of St.

John arrived and became the Sovereign Military Hospitaller Order of Saint John of Jerusalem, of Rhodes, and of Malta in 1530. Needless to say, my comments were not well received. I asked for the citation the Sir Knight used that stated these facts. He said he would get back to me. I am still waiting. This incident leads me to think that many of our Sir Knights do not have a real grasp of history.

The fact that we put the Order of Malta before the Order of the Temple is probably confusing. The Knights Templar disappeared from history in the very early 14<sup>th</sup> Century (1307-1314), and the Knights of Malta did not arrive on the



Fortifications in the harbor on the Island of Malta. Photo by the editor.  
knight templar

scene until the early 16<sup>th</sup> century (1530).

I have consulted several books on the First and Second Crusades and the Crusades in general and find no reference to Malta being a starting point or a resupply point. Ships leaving from Aigues-Mortes, in the Occitania region of southern France, would head for Sicily or the southwest coast of Italy. Ships from Genoa would follow the west coast of Italy. Ships from Venice and Brindisi would head for the west coast of Greece. Ships at this time usually followed the coast and avoided open sea, as the magnetic compass only came into use after 1190 and was not widely used at first. To add a little clarity to this monograph, we need to look at a brief history of Malta. Beginning in 395 AD, Byzantium dominated Malta until 870 AD. In 870 AD, Aghlabid Arabs conquered Malta.

The fortified Roman settlement of Melita, on the highlands in the center of Malta, was reduced in size, further fortified, and renamed Medina, precursor to the city of Mellieha. The Arabs constructed a fort on the site of present-day Fort St. Angelo. In 909 AD, Fatimids Arabs conquered Malta. In 1053 AD, the Byzantine Empire unsuccessfully attempted to recapture the islands. In 1091 AD, Norman Count Roger, I of Sicily invaded Malta, and the Muslim inhabitants negotiated a peaceful surrender. Gozo was sacked by the Normans. In 1127 AD, Norman control over Malta was consolidated under Roger, II of Sicily. A Norman governor was installed, and Norman soldiers were garrisoned in Malta's three main castles.

Christianity was re-established as the Islands' dominant religion. Malta was part of the Kingdom of Sicily for nearly 440 years. During this period, Malta

was sold and resold to various feudal lords and barons and was dominated successively by the rulers of Swabia, Anjou, Aragon, and Castile. Eventually, the Crown of Aragon, which then ruled Malta, joined with Castile in 1479, and Malta became part of the Spanish Empire.

The islands remained largely Muslim-inhabited long after the end of Arab rule. The Arab administration was also kept in place, and Muslims were allowed to practice their religion freely until the 13<sup>th</sup> century. As a result of this favorable environment, (*Malta-A Short History*)<sup>2</sup> Muslims continued to demographically and economically dominate Malta for at least another 150 years after the Christian conquest of 1091 AD.

After the Norman conquest, the Christian population of the Maltese islands kept growing, mainly through immigration from the north (Sicily and Italy), the stationing of a Norman-Sicilian garrison on Malta in 1240 AD, and the settlement on Malta of noble families from Sicily between 1372 AD and 1450 AD. In 1367 AD, according to Masonic tradition, the Mediterranean Pass was created. (Mackey, Albert G., *An Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and It's Kindred Sciences, A New & Revised Edition*, Vol. 1, The Masonic History Company, 1921, pg. 401.) By the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century, all Maltese Muslims were forced to convert to Christianity and had to find ways to disguise their previous identities by Latinizing or adopting new surnames. In 1522 AD, Suleiman, I drove the Military Hospitaller Knights of St. John of Jerusalem off the island of Rhodes. On October 26, 1530 AD, in an effort to protect Rome from Islamic invasion, Emperor Charles, V granted the Maltese Islands to the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem in

perpetual fief.

### What can we conclude?

- Malta was not a way-stop going to the Levant for the Crusades, considering that most Crusades in the Levant were over by the beginning of the 14<sup>th</sup> Century.
- A Mediterranean Pass could be used for safe travel, by ship, to ports in the Mediterranean, such as transport to Malta to join the Knights of Malta. I would welcome any first or secondary

sources detailing Malta being used as a way-stop to the Levant for the Crusades, prior to the island's occupation by the Knights of Malta.

Michael J. Kastle is past grand commander of the Grand Commandery of the District of Columbia. He resides in Leesburg, Virginia and can be contacted at kamjk@outlook.com.

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# Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.

## 54<sup>th</sup> Voluntary Campaign

Easter Greetings to all Sir Knights of the  
Grand Encampment,

“He is Risen.”

**T**his month we celebrate Easter, the resurrection of the Son of God. He was crucified on a cross to save us from eternal damnation and rose from the grave to claim victory over death.

*“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” - John 3:16 KJV. This passage is the cornerstone of our belief as Christians.*



Sir Knights, as Templars we are taught that we are true followers in the faith of Jesus, and it is our duty to promote the principles of our order and support the agenda of our Knight Templar Eye Foundation. The 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Knights Templar Eye Foundation Voluntary Campaign comes to an end on April 30, 2022. It has been a distinct honor and privilege to work alongside you to ensure the continued funding and support of our Knights Templar Eye Foundation.

Tremendous efforts have been accomplished, but I pray that even more can be done. I call upon all grand commanders, state coordinators, and state Knights Templar Eye Foundation chairmen to contact each Commandery and put forth every effort during the remaining weeks to promote the campaign in some positive way. I call on all Sir Knights to assist in every way possible to make the 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Voluntary Campaign a success.

During this campaign, my intent was to share some of my personal feelings and experiences with you, and I hope that you found some of the articles this past year interesting.

On behalf of all of us at the Knights Templar Eye Foundation, we thank you for your continued support.

“He is Risen Indeed.”

Onward Christian Soldiers.

In His Service,  
Lon W. Kvasager, KCT  
chairman, 54<sup>th</sup> Annual Voluntary Campaign

# The Order of Malta

By  
Sir Knight Brandon Mullins

I wish to begin this article on whether a Hindu can be a member of the Order of Malta with a practical example that presented itself several years ago in my Chapter of Royal Arch Masons. We had a companion who, shortly after being exalted to the Royal Arch Degree,

expressed his interest in joining our Commandery of Knights Templar. We knew this companion quite well and were aware that he described his religious beliefs as “Mystic Philosophy” and in no way considered himself a Christian. Because of this, we let him know that, while Free-



Grand Master's Palace of the Order of Malta on the Island of Rhodes. Photo by the editor.

masonry is an interfaith organization, the Commandery is ecumenical, and as such, requires its members to be Christians.

At the time, he seemed satisfied with this explanation, and as our York Rite bodies had many Jewish and other non-Christian members, he was not in an unusual position and received no pressure to join Commandery from our members. However, it wasn't long before members of another Commandery told him that our membership requirements were more or less dead letters or open enough to interpretation as to be meaningless and that he should petition their Commandery despite his religious beliefs, which he did.

Soon, we learned that he received the full form conferral of the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross, which he thoroughly enjoyed, and a month or so later, he received the full form conferral of the Order of Malta, which made him so uncomfortable that he seriously considered walking out during the conferral and immediately withdrew his petition to join their Commandery. This experience came with a few lessons. For starters, we must be clear with our companions that not only is there a membership requirement but that this requirement is not arbitrary. In our orders, you will be affirming Christian doctrine and pledging yourself to the Christian religion. It brought into focus the intensely Christian nature of the Order of Malta, which often gets overlooked with all the focus on the Order of the Temple.

Throughout Freemasonry, you are introduced to many Christian presuppositions, but it is in the Order of Malta that the Gospel itself first appears, and when it does, it assumes that the candidate is already well familiar with it and accepts

it completely. Allowing a companion to participate in the Order of Malta without that familiarity and acceptance is not fair to the candidate and misrepresents the organization.

With that example in mind, I would like to move on to the matter of Hinduism specifically. My wife grew up Hindu, and while she converted to Christianity during university, the vast majority of my in-laws remain Hindu today, and as a result, I am likely more familiar with the religion than your average person in the West, but the extent of my familiarity with Hinduism is more rooted in the practice and traditions of average Hindus as opposed to what may come from academic study. We belong to a Bengali cultural organization here in Michigan which is largely Hindu, and as a family, we participate in many events that one might call implicitly Hindu or culturally Hindu, without being explicitly Hindu, or requiring any specific religious practices or beliefs.

The line between culture and religion is not always easy to pinpoint, but we do our best to navigate it. That said, I find that most Hindus in the West have warm feelings toward Christianity and Jesus Christ himself. However, as many Christian missionaries have found, that warmth does not generally translate to the exclusivity integral to Christianity, and in fact, you can often find Hindus who are perfectly happy with nearly everything Christianity states, save its instance on exclusivity.

I have been to a Vishnu Mandir where a statue of Jesus was there, ready to be venerated. This same Mandir states that "Hinduism regards all religions as true paths to the same God," and while this idea is not universally held in Hinduism,

western Hindus in general tend to espouse this view. My in-laws for example will happily affirm the vast majority of Christian statements I make and are happy that I am raising their grandchildren with due reverence for God. Because of this, there is a great deal of common ground between us, but it would be foolish to gloss over everything, as we do have genuine disputes.

I for example, do not allow my children to make offerings to murtis, and they do not approve of my disbelief in their deities but none the less allow me to run my household as I please with the utmost respect and courtesy. Because of the Hindu openness to the deity of Christ, one could be convinced that it is appropriate to make a Hindu a Knight of Malta. I would argue that is a mistake. For all the common ground Christians share with Hindus in the belief of the goodness of God and his worthiness to be praised, the specifics of theology remain in dispute, and those specifics are affirmed in the Order of Malta.

Knights of Malta are required to affirm the belief that "The Savior died on the Cross for the remission of sins." Whatever your views on soteriology are, as a Christian you should be able to affirm this, but Hindus have a completely different theology of sin or pāpa and the idea that Jesus Christ's death could

atone for sins is a theological bridge too far for the devout Hindu. It would also require a great deal of mental gymnastics to say that they would wish to "fight against all opposers of the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," as the Gospel itself includes the very exclusivity Hindus would take issue with.

The titles of "King of Kings" and "Lord of Lords" for Jesus Christ would also run afoul of devout Hindu belief. A Hindu may very well happily affirm that Jesus Christ is God, but there is more to Christianity than that. As with my initial example, I think there is a temptation, one that often comes from the best of intentions, to be more open in our membership, to allow anyone to partake in our ceremonies, but ultimately, that will do more harm than good. In that decision we either offend companions of other religions by making them affirm doctrine that conflicts with their beliefs, or we set the precedent that nothing said in our orders matters, that they are playing a part, just saying their lines, and as such we drain all significance from the organization.

Sir Knight Brandon Mullins is past commander of Ann Arbor Commandery 13 in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He can be contacted at [brandon.mullins@outlook.com](mailto:brandon.mullins@outlook.com).

Barracks of the several languages of the Knights of Malta on the Island of Rhodes.

Photo by the editor.



knight templar

# Meet Our Department Commanders

## Sir Knight Dustin Verity

### Right Eminent Department Commander

#### Asia Pacific Department

**D**ustin Verity was born on July 26, 1972, in Kalispell, Montana. He graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Accounting with Graduate Certificates in Data Analysis and Entrepreneurship from MIT and Babson College, respectively. He serves as the managing partner of Verity CPAs, a top fifteen certified public accounting firm in Hawaii that he founded in 2012.

Dustin began his Masonic journey in 2005 and has served as worshipful master of Ko'olau Lodge F. & A. M. three times, high priest of Kalakaua Chapter 2 of Royal Arch Masons, thrice illustrious master of Kalakaua Council 2 of Cryptic Masons, and commander of Kalakaua Commandery 2 of Knights Templar. He then went on to serve as grand high priest, grand illustrious master, and grand commander of Hawaii. He has also served as the governor of Hawaii York Rite Sovereign College 164 and currently serves as the prior of Honolulu, Knights of the York Cross of Honour; chief adept IX° of the Hawaii College SRICF; treasurer of Shriners' Hospital – Honolulu; and senior grand warden of the Grand Lodge of Hawaii.

He is also a Scottish Rite 32° Knight Commander Court of Honour, and a member of the Red Cross of Constantine, National Sojourners, and Heroes of '76.

Dustin served honorably in the United States Marine Corps for eight years from 1990 to 1998, serving in such units as the 3<sup>rd</sup> Surveillance Reconnaissance Intelligence Group in Okinawa, Japan and MCAS El Toro in Orange County California.

He is a recreational triathlete and homebrewer and enjoys ocean swims, long bike rides, and scuba diving.

Dustin is married to his lovely wife, Alice, with whom he shares two sons, Kane and Josiah, who have graduated and who are looking forward to moving out of the house.

Dustin was installed as the department commander for the Asia Pacific Department during the 68<sup>th</sup> Triennial Conclave of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the United States of America on August 18, 2021.



# *Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc*

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## **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:

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**www.ktef.org**

## **William Jackson Jones**

### **Most Eminent Past Grand Master**

### **Grand Encampment of Knights Templar**

Sir Knight William Jackson Jones was born on March 12, 1939, in Tuscola, Illinois. He attended high school in Villa Grove, Illinois, at Villa Grove High School. He went on to the University of Illinois for his B.S. in 1961, and he received his D.D.S. there in 1964.

He married Lois A. Robinson at Tolono, Illinois, on December 10, 1967, and they had two children, Philip and Jane; one son-in-law; one daughter-in-law; and one granddaughter. Sir Knight Jones resided in Villa Grove, Illinois, where he practiced dentistry for over fifty years.

Sir Knight Jones held numerous civic positions, including serving as a member of the Board of Directors of the Villa Grove Chamber of Commerce; Board of Directors, American Heart Association, Illinois Affiliate; Villa Grove Schools Citizens Consulting Committee; Board of Directors for Villa Grove Community Theater; and president of the Eastern Illinois Dental Society.

Masonically, Sir Knight Jones was raised in Villa Grove Lodge 885, Villa Grove, Illinois, in September of 1960, where he has served as worshipful master. In the York Rite, he was a member of Tuscola Chapter 66, in Tuscola, Illinois, where he served as high priest. He was a member of the Order of High Priesthood. He was a member of Mattoon Council 10, Mattoon, Illinois, where he served as thrice illustrious master. He was created a Knight Templar on December 1, 1969, in Melita Commandery 37, Tuscola, Illinois, where he served as commander in 1972 and 1977. He was a member and past preceptor of Lily of the Valley Tabernacle XLVI, HRAKTP. In addition, he served as grand preceptor of the Grand College of America, HRAKTP, in 2001.

Appendant Masonic activities included membership in the Scottish Rite, Northern Masonic Jurisdiction, the Valley of Danville, Illinois. He was coronated an inspector general honorary of the 33° in 1985. Sir Knight Jones was a member of Ansar Temple, Springfield, Illinois, AAONMS. He belonged to the Knights of the York Cross of Honour and was the recipient of the Order of the Purple Cross in 1988. He was a member of Saxa Rubra Conclave, Red Cross of Constantine and the Royal Order of Scotland. He was an active member of the DeMolay Legion of Honour, a recipient of the Order of Chevalier, and an honorary member of the International Supreme Council, Order of DeMolay. He was a member of the Order of the Eastern Star, Knight Masons, and the Order of the Amaranth. He served the Grand College of Rites of the United States of America as grand chancellor in 1999.

In the Grand Commandery of Illinois, he ascended the grand line, serving as grand commander in 1984. He was a holder of the Knight Commander of the Temple and the Grand Cross of the Temple.

In the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar, he was appointed right eminent department commander of the North Central Department by Donald Hinslea Smith, most eminent grand master on August 13, 1985, in Cincinnati, Ohio; elected right eminent grand captain general on August 20, 1991, in Washington, D.C.; elected right eminent grand generalissimo in August of 1994 in Denver, Colorado; elected right eminent deputy grand master on August 12, 1997, in St. Louis, Missouri; and was elected most eminent grand master of the Grand Encampment on August 16, 2000, in Nashville, Tennessee.

Sir Knight Jones laid down his sword and entered the Supreme Asylum above on Monday, January 31, 2022.



# With Eyes Forward

**W**hile the Covid-19 pandemic has caused many adjustments and some cancellations, the Knights Templar Holy Land Pilgrimage program moves ahead **with eyes forward**.

Keep in mind this vital date: **September 20**. It is the date each year that all Pilgrim Ministers are to be registered with the registrar of the Grand Encampment Committee on the Holy Land Pilgrimage. It is the same date every year. Grand recorders and your state committee chairman need to have sent in the:

1. Registration Form
2. Nomination Form
3. And full payment by that date.

The groups of Pilgrim Ministers travel in February. There are many arrangements, reservations, bookings, and details to be put in place from September through the end of January.

All other activities can happen year-round. These would include: recruitment of ministers to be nominated (see Guidelines for Selection), fundraising, and program promotion. Ministers can be nominated by a local commandery and those nominations forwarded to your state Holy Land Pilgrimage Committee or chairman at any time. Donations and fundraising can also be an ongoing enterprise.

Always check the web site listed below for the most current information and details.

## **In addition:**

**In the Footsteps of Jesus Holy Land Pilgrimage for Sir Knights, their Ladies, Friends, and Guests** is open to anyone. Each person is responsible for his own fees and expenses related to the pilgrimage. Each person is responsible for being able to manage his own luggage and follow the itinerary. This pilgrimage is an eleven-day program that covers as much ground as possible in the touring days. We average five to seven miles of walking many days, often uphill or up steps and on uneven surfaces.

Current plans are moving forward for the next **In the Footsteps Pilgrimage** for November 7 – 17, 2022. See the website listed below for more information.

Stay up to date at: **kthlp.com** (Remember the first letters of Knights Templar Holy Land Pilgrimage.)

# Leadership Notes

## Leadership as a Master Mason

**I** think that I can say with confidence that all Companions and Sir Knights remember the night that they were raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason. It was the night you would finally become a Master Mason and unlock all the secrets Masonry had to unveil. Once you completed this degree, you did it, you were a Master Mason, now able to travel to foreign lands and receive Master's wages, which for some of us means visiting other lodges and jurisdictions, and in some jurisdictions this privilege was only previously afforded if accompanied by your Worshipful Master.

As a Master Mason, you would be able to wear Masonic regalia, such as the square and compasses, which many of us do in the form of a Masonic ring. In addition to having the rights and privileges of a Master Mason, you learned of the various pathways one can take to further his Masonic journey. Some try their hand at leadership in the Blue Lodge by volunteering to be an officer. Others seek to finish their Masonic journey by way of joining the York Rite. Others want to attend "masonic college," learning the lessons of the Scottish Rite, or to devote themselves to charity by becoming a Shriner. Regardless which path is chosen; they all voluntarily chose to try their hand at becoming a Masonic Leader, but what does it mean to be or become a Masonic leader?

By definition, a Masonic leader would be someone who leads Masons, like an officer of the Lodge, but what is a leader? According to *The American Heritage College Dictionary*, a leader is "One that leads or guides, one who is in charge or in command, one who heads a political party or organization, one who has influence or power, especially politically." Thus, as the dictionary would put it, in order to be a leader, you simply have to be in charge and have influence. I would say that in volunteer organizations such as Masonry, it is easy to be in charge, as most people respect the title. However, how do we establish influence, or rather, how do we establish such influence as to motivate volunteers?

Before answering that question, I would like to describe an event that took place along my Masonic journey. The event occurred after being raised to the Sublime Degree of Master Mason. I did what most, or what I believe to be what most of us do, and I went and got a cool Masonic ring. However, what I did not know was what came along with wearing that ring. Almost immediately my ring was being noticed by people followed by question after question, either causing me to explain or defend the craft. I can recall an event that most definitely instructed me on the importance and responsibility of wearing such a beautiful emblem. Once, I met someone who after seeing my ring, placed his hand over it and said something about the

dark. I was confused, but it turns out that he was clandestine, and I was supposed to say, "Let there be Light." That later turned into a good friendship and resulted in the brother later being healed and becoming a legitimate Mason.

By way of your working tools, while coming up through Masonry, you learned certain things along the path. You learned how to manage oneself as an Entered Apprentice, then how to deal with and work well with others as a Fellowcraft. As a Master Mason your working tool is the trowel. With it you are taught how to instill harmony. When looking toward the emblem of the anchor and the ark, we are reminded to speak consciously as the way to maintain well-grounded hope and a well spent life, but how does one keep the peace or rather maintain harmony? In my opinion, in order for one to best maintain harmony, it is necessary that he possesses the same trait required to answer uncomfortable questions and to effectively lead people, and that is influential communication.

Influential communication is the "trowel" part of being a leader. As such, it is the title of the third course in the York Rite Leadership Program. This series of executive training courses brings together concepts and practices from well-known leadership authors, coaches, and education theorists, with a slant toward volunteer organizational environments and Freemasonry in particular. It is also designed to map and to continue learning from our degrees and orders.

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

Sir Knight Kevin A. Wheeler  
York Rite Leadership Faculty





# Beauceant News

March 1, 2022

My Beautiful Beauceant Sisters,

**A**s Children, each Easter morning, we would jump out of bed to see what was in our Easter basket. We would eat chocolate bunnies, hunt eggs with cousins, and celebrate with family and friends. Oh, and we always had to have pictures taken in the same place wearing our new clothes which my mother made for us. Some of you are laughing, because you have similar memories, I know.

Some of our cherished memories have nothing to do with our Easter celebrations, but reflect to that much deeper, such as the following...

My father's favorite song was "The Old Rugged Cross." I recall many times when he would request the choir leader to sing this song, and while he did so, my dad would sit with tears streaming down his face in worship. I have witnessed him raise his hands while singing, "I will cling to the Old Rugged Cross, and exchange it one day for a crown." I cannot hear this song and NOT think of him and now of our beautiful order.

How blessed we are to know that the cherished cross was just the beginning of the story.

We know that our Savior died there for those who will believe and accept Him. He was buried, yet **HE LIVES!** He has gone to prepare a place for us, so that where He is, there we may be also. Sisters, we have something beyond wonderful for which to hope!

Should we have no other memories, let us never forget His sacrifice on our behalf and cling to the promises of the Savior. This blessed Easter season, and every day hereafter, let us celebrate His love for us! Let us be faithful, loyal, and loving.

In Beauceant love,

(Mrs. Charles M.) Susan Thames

*"...she who bears the cross, will wear the crown of life that awaits those who are faithful."*



Sir Knight Joseph Anderson, right eminent grand commander of Knights Templar in Minnesota, and other Grand Commandery officers and past grand commanders of Minnesota joined Supreme Worthy President Mrs. Charles M. Thames at Minneapolis Assembly 46 for their annual “Bottle Auction fundraiser” previous to their official visit. Proceeds go to the Assembly benevolent work.

### ***Faith, Loyalty, and Love***

#### **\$25 donation of Faith**

- (Mrs. Martin) Mary Callaway, LaCrosse 215, Wisconsin
- (Mrs. Terry) Nancy Loper, LaCrosse 215, Wisconsin
- (Mrs. Terry) Nancy Loper, LaCrosse 215, Wisconsin
- Mrs. Lila Kimball, LaCrosse 215, Wisconsin
- (Mrs. Richard) Mary Lou Reilly, LaCrosse 215, Wisconsin
- (Mrs. Burnell) Gloria Roble, LaCrosse 215, Wisconsin
- (Mrs. LeRoy) Diana Kifer, LaCrosse 215, Wisconsin
- Mrs JoAnne Lerud-Heck, Denver 1, Colorado
- Ms. Lynne Smith, Fredericksburg 266, Virginia
- (Mrs. Robert) Sandra Cole, Santa Ana 61, California

#### **\$50 donation of Loyalty**

- Mrs. Judy Bessinger, LaCrosse 215, Wisconsin
- Mrs. Mary Kumbier, LaCrosse 215, Wisconsin
- (Mrs. Ross) Janet Pollock 215, Wisconsin
- Mrs. Carole Peterson, Denver 1, Colorado

#### **\$100 donation of Love**

- (Mrs. D. Wayne) Esther Howard, Melrose 204, Texas
- Mrs. Bonnie Springer, Denver 1, Colorado

Special recognition goes out to Los Angeles Assembly 42, CA for their gift of \$34,840.36 designated for the Knights Templar Eye Foundation. This donation, along with others, are making life “sweeter and better for others” through sight giving research.

# NEW CONTRIBUTORS TO THE KTEF CLUBS

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### Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Virginia Limited Edition Bicentennial Medal



- 2023 is the Bicentennial Year for the Grand Commandery of Virginia.
- Only 200 medals will be produced to commemorate 200 years.
- When they are all sold, no more will be made.
- Cost is \$200 each - for an additional \$10 each your name and your Commandery name can be engraved on the back.

To get yours go to:

<https://grand-commandery-of-knights-templar-of-virginia.myshopify.com/>



# Knights



## at the Bookshelf

By

Sir Knight Bill Lorenz, PC

*21<sup>st</sup> Century Conversations About Freemasonry: A Candle in the Dark*, co-authored by John W. Bizzack and Dan Kemble, available in paperback (\$43.08) through Amazon.

**21<sup>st</sup> Century Conversations** *About Freemasonry: A Candle in the Dark* is presented as a discussion of active Masons, friends from across the nation, who miss attending their lodge meetings due to the pandemic. The characters in the book, entered apprentice to past grand masters, are fictional. By no means is this a book of fiction. The discussions are real. Well researched authors, John W. Bizzack and Dan Kemble, team together to make one very worthwhile book.

*21<sup>st</sup> Century Conversations* reflects what Masons are saying to themselves, or to a few close friends. "What happened to the great years of Freemasonry, and what will Freemasonry become in future?" It demonstrates that it has been many years since we implemented "rational thinking and dialogue" (Enlightenment ideals) in our important decisions for the direction of the Lodges and their activities.

It is through this premise, "rational thinking and dialogue," that co-authors John W. Bizzack and Dan Kemble have nineteen fellow Masons come together to discuss Freemasonry. The brothers choose a "virtual" environment as the nineteen fictitious friends from across the country share their thoughts and experiences in Freemasonry.

The conversations flow easily from one brother to another, each adding something of his own observations. Although the characters are fictitious, anyone who travels in Masonic circles will recognize the characters' questioning thoughts, opinions, and concerns in brothers they know. In fact, through introspection, one may find a piece of himself in at least some of the characters.

Two topics were agreed upon by the nineteen friends to set the stage for discussion. First, the philosophies of the Enlightenment "learning, science, and reason," define the way Freemasonry was intended to be practiced. Second, the principles of the Enlightenment nourished "the ideals of liberty, equality, and frater-

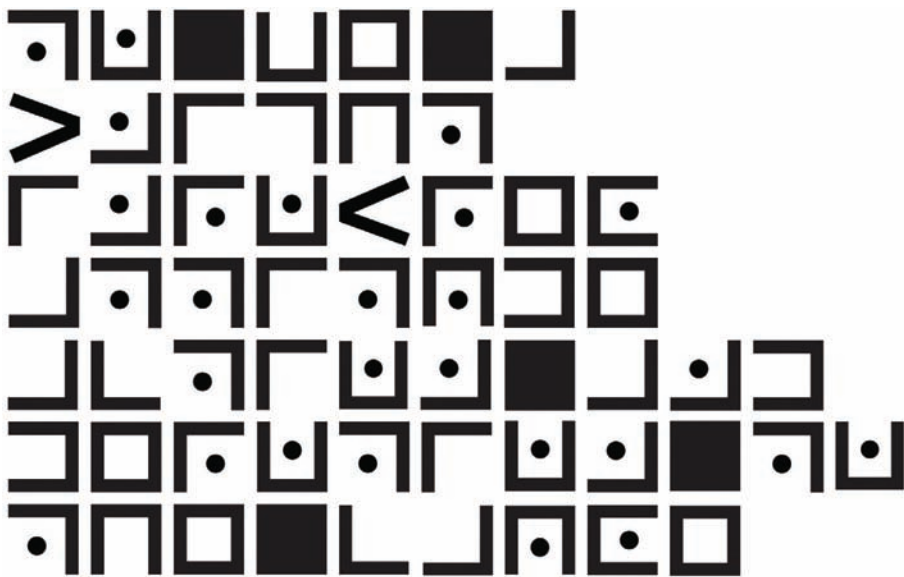
nity,” which were instrumental in both American Freemasonry and in bringing the American colonies together.

The first question is addressed, “Does contemporary American culture still value the ideals that characterized the Age of Enlightenment?” Discussion leads to other questions and later to the thought that there are two types of active Lodge members, “Mainstream Masonic Community” (Charity minded) and the “Heritage Seekers” (the return to Enlightenment ideals). Both groups agree that Freemasonry has relaxed its standards in dress code, ritual expectations, and requirements for membership. The lack of Masonic education is definitely a major problem. So why aren’t lodges talking about this?

“What came ye here to do?” – 1) to learn, 2) to subdue my passions (a moral compass), and 3) to improve myself, but a new Mason is left on his own to do so.

This is an outstanding book. Space does not allow this brief review to do it justice. The brothers willing, any Lodge could quickly be improved.

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.



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>.

Knight Templar  
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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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