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KNIGHT TEMPLAR

VOLUME LXIX

FEBRUARY 2023

NUMBER 2

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KNIGHT TEMPLAR

VOLUME LXIX FEBRUARY 2023 NUMBER 2

Grand Encampment of Knights Templar
of the United States of America.



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Grand Master

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Grand Master's Message

Sir Knight David J. Kussman, GCT

Grand Master of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar

**To the Sir Knights of the Grand Encampment Knights Templar, USA.
Greetings in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ!**



For most of the world the month of February reminds us of the principle of love. That attribute which is so particularly important to man's happiness and success in this world of ours. Thoughts of Valentine's Day are in the hearts and minds of men and women.

But it is much more than that to us in the Family of Freemasonry, particularly the Templar Orders and the Social Order of the Beauceant.

C. S. Lewis identified *four* types of love in the Bible in Greek. Though sources such as *Psychology Today* identify seven types of Greek words for love, I will focus on the four most commonly identified.

Storge might also be called affection or familial love. This word is not used in the Bible, but the concept is there. Storge is based on familiarity. A person will love their family regardless of whether they are people the person would be drawn to otherwise; family members often have nothing in common except familiarity and blood. Storge is a comfortable affection that can be taken for granted but can also be enormously powerful.

Eros is romantic love. Eros also is not a word that appears in the Bible, though it plays a major role in a lot of Old Testament problems. Eros encompasses sexual and romantic love. Eros is often associated with sexual desire and lust, but it can also be a

good thing in a marriage relationship when accompanied by other kinds of love.

Philia is friendship love. This word is used in the Bible. As C. S. Lewis wrote in his book, *The Four Loves*, "To the Ancients, Friendship seemed the happiest and most fully human of all loves." Philia occurs from bonding over similar interests. Friends, of

course, care about one another, but it is similar interests that attract them to one another. In Romans 12:10, Paul urges the believers to be devoted to one another in brotherly philia. Philia can be strongly associated with agape as well. In John 15:13, Jesus said there is no greater agape than laying down one's life for one's friends.

Agape could be defined as charity. However, we often think of charity nowadays as giving away money or things, which does not encompass all what agape is about. Agape love is unconcerned with the self and concerned with the greatest good of another. Agape is not born just out of emotions, feelings, familiarity, or attraction but from the will and as a choice. Agape requires faithfulness, commitment, and sacrifice without expecting anything in return. This is the type of love the Bible speaks about the most. The New Testament references agape *over two hundred times*.

To the Greeks, proper agape meant a general empathy or lovingkindness for all

"Agape love does not come naturally to us in our sinful state. However, it does come naturally to God and is an integral part of Him."

people. Christianity took this a step further, in the Bible, Christians are indeed expected to care for all in the name of Christ.

Biblical writers used God as the standard for true agape. Agape love, in the Bible, is love that comes from God. God's love is not sentimental; it is part of His character. God loves from an outpouring of who He is. As 1 John 4:8 states, "God is love [agapos]," meaning, He is the source of agape love. His love is undeserved, gracious, and sacrificial.

We are to love God and others with agape love. Agape is a choice, a deliberate striving for another's highest good.

God set the standard for agape love in sending Jesus to die for us while we were still sinners. Matthew 22:37-39, also known as "The Greatest Commandments," instructs us to *agapao* God and our neighbors, while Matthew 5:43-46 instructs us to even *agapao* our enemies.

However, a person can also agape or wholeheartedly love the wrong things. 1 John 2:15 warns believers not to love the things of the world. Though other types of love can accompany agape, agape is not just a feeling but a choice.

What agape Means for Us

Agape love does not come naturally to us in our sinful state.

However, it does come naturally to God and is an integral part of Him. By drawing closer to Him and experiencing His love, we

can begin to understand what this real love means. Only through Him can we show and experience agape love. This is the love that is practiced everyday by the Family of Freemasonry and is why I am so immensely proud to be counted amongst its members.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

Our journey continues...

David J. Kussman

David J. Kussman, GCT
Grand Master



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Prelate's Apartment

Rev. Terry L. Plemons
Grand Prelate of the Grand Encampment

The people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits. – Daniel 11:32

The word "know" is far more than "knowing about someone or something." It means to know someone intimately, to have a relationship with someone. The greatest call in our life is to know God.

Regardless of our circumstances, successes or failure, sickness or health, He is God. In all things give thanks. He meets us at the very point of needs. Keep a heart that will praise him, not only because of our circumstances but in spite of our circumstances, remembering always "all things work to His glory."

We only have one true source that brings provision into our lives. We only have one source who covers us within an indescribable peace, one source who will never abandon us, one source who constantly longs after us, one source who is intimately aware of our past, involved in our today, and is already in all of our tomorrows, one source that gives us strength.

Understanding who He is, what kind of Kingdom he is over, understanding the perfection of His will in our lives – when we understand everything we have is from him – then praise will rise from the depths of our souls.

The word Kingdom is so important. We pray for Gods Kingdom to come. In this, we voluntarily surrender every part of our lives to him. Paul said, "to live is Christ, to die is gain." John the Baptist said, "He must increase and I must decrease." His desires are better than my desires, his purposes are



better than my purposes, his plans are better than my plans, "I must decrease and He must increase."

Too often men call the name of God in their lives, but never acknowledge his kingship. It is easy to say, "God is first in my life." It is a totally different matter to have this manifested in our lives. Do we pursue God with the same love that He pursues us?

The highest purpose of man is to glorify God, as the Psalmist wrote "give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name, worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness."

Join me in remembering and praising the One who while we were yet sinners died for us, the One who calls us each by name, the One who redeems and justifies us before the Father. He is worthy of our Praise!

In Christ Love

Terry

Sir Knight Terry L. Plemons
Grand Prelate

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Parade step off at: 7:40 a.m.
Easter Memorial Service: 8 a.m.
Buses return: approx. 9:30 a.m.

THE

OF THE



HERESIES



THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

PART 2

by Robert Elsner

Last month we introduced the topic of heresy, including definitions, perspectives, and some history. We only considered one of the first heresies, Ebionitism, and how it is still with us today. This month we continue on with several more of the major heresies as defined by orthodox, trinitarian Christianity, many of which are also still with us.

Gnosticism

Gnosticism comes out of a pre-Christian idea of knowing something special, which is what the Greek word *gnosis* means: knowing. It is a doctrine of salvation by special knowledge, and this special knowledge was available only to a few, so only a few who know the secret will be saved by God. Gnosticism was “Dualist” in ideas of good versus evil. Under their system, God is only Good, and only spiritual, and the devil was only evil, and only material. Gnostics believe that God, being good, could not have made the world with evil in it, so therefore must have made lesser gods like Satan to create evil. These evil gods therefore must have made all physical things, and all physical things must be evil, constantly at odds with the good of the spirit. One of the most popular of Gnostics was a latter gnostic named Montanus, who gained popularity by telling people that the Kingdom of God was at hand, and only he knew the time and place. Many heretics have followed Montanus’ footsteps, building their following by predicting times and places for the end of days.

Christian Gnostics, as a general rule, tend to believe

that Christ was not really a human, but a spirit that fooled people into thinking that he was a man. Under these ideas, the birth and crucifixion of Christ were shams, the resurrection a lie, meaning that God is not faithful. Within Anglicanism, Gnosticism was an important part of many splinter groups which wanted to forsake all aspects of the physical world, and taught that all physical pleasures – from food and comforts to sexual behavior – were not gifts from God, but temptations from the devil, meaning that the devil has as much power as God, in itself a major heresy.

Marcion, a rich ship owner and early Christian convert, thought that there needed to be a complete break from the Jewish tradition to open Christianity to the rest of the Roman Empire. He was the first to compile and canonize scripture within a semi-Christian context. He rejected the entire Old Testament since it was Jewish. He accepted the following Christian writings in this order: the Gospel according to Luke, Galatians, I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Romans, I Thessalonians, II Thessalonians, Ephesians (which he called Laodiceans), Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians. Marcion edited all of these to make them less Jewish and more Gentile. Without Marcion, it may have been much longer before the Council of Nicaea or other councils of the church formed the canon of Christianity we know as the New Testament.

The First Letter of John addressed a particularly virulent form of Gnosticism that is called Docetism, which denied the humanity of Jesus. Docetism is still with us today. Docetism states that Jesus could be a mixture of spirit and matter, therefore good and evil, and that Jesus only learned that he was part of the Godhead at his baptism. Cerinthus, a docetist in Ephesus, argued that Jesus was born human; He grew up like anyone else. Jesus retained his humanity only until he

was baptized. Cerinthus said that, at baptism, Jesus shed His humanity and thence only appeared to be human. As wholly divine he was able to perform miracles. Cerinthus said that on the cross, God revoked Jesus divinity, thus Mark 15:34:

And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is interpreted as “My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”

Many bad sermons are still preached in this vein, not realizing that Jesus was quoting Psalm 22. Even though God seemed to be forsaking Jesus, He is ever faithful, no matter what people think.

According to the docetists, at the resurrection, God restored Jesus’ divinity. John says that whoever denies that Jesus came in the flesh, denies Jesus completely. John says that this is akin to the anti-Christ. Docetism was strongest in Ephesus, where John’s letter was sent. The docetists claimed that although Jesus appeared to be human, He had no real human body. The serious challenge to our faith, then, is that Jesus’ suffering was therefore not real – He had no corporal form for pain and suffering to work upon – and He could not therefore identify with us.

Some key dates for Gnosticism:

- c. 140 Valentinus begins teaching Gnostic views in Rome
- 144 Marcion (see note below) is excommunicated for Gnostic-like views
- c. 180 Irenaeus writes *Against the Heresies*, opposing Gnosticism
- c. 157 Montanus begins prophesying that the Heavenly Jerusalem will soon descend in Phrygia, in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey)



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"Many bad sermons are still preached in this vien,
not realizing that Jesus was quoting Psalm 22."

- 170s Montanism develops ecstatic and ascetic practices
- c. 190 Montanism condemned by church councils in Asia Minor
- c. 207 Tertullian converts to Montanism

good? Can spiritual issues be just as evil as some physical? Try to name a few possibly even well-intentioned spiritual issues that have led to evil.

- Do you believe in resurrection? If so, will you have a body, or just be a spirit? What does the Bible say about this?

Questions to ask:

- If in Matthew 24:36 and Mark 13:32, Jesus says that even He does not know the hour and day of His return to earth, can any human know? Is there a secret code in the Bible that even Jesus could not interpret?
- Was Jesus a real person? Was he born as a human being? Was he also really God?
- Are all pleasures of the flesh inherently evil? If so, why did God create them?
- Is it part of God's plan to have physical things be bad and spiritual things be

What does Gnosticism look like today?

Today we see people who say that God could not have come down from Heaven to become incarnate. If God were on earth, they say, He would have to be a projection, not a person. If Christ was not a real person, though, God would have broken His promises in both the Old and New Testaments. Recall that in Genesis, God appears in person: He walked with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. He came again in the personhood of Jesus.



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Tombstones at the Ancient Bogomil Cemetery in Serbia (the Bogomils were a Christian neo-Gnostic religious and political sect founded in Bulgaria at 10th century)

Today, some people claim that you have to join a specific group in order to receive some sort of mystic information required for entry into Heaven. But all information necessary for salvation is contained in the Bible. While some may claim only their interpretation of the Bible is valid, it's worth remembering that the Bible is a living document: the Holy Spirit speaks to us as we read. Some readings a passage will inspire no understanding, yet others will arise the Spirit to move within us to open the passage to new or deeper meanings.

Only the Holy Spirit does this, not members of cults or special groups.

Monarchianism

Monarchianism viewed God the Father as separate and distinct from Christ, not as part of the Holy Trinity. It was an extreme monotheistic view: Monarchianists typically regarded Christ as Redeemer, but as an appointee, not as divine. Eventually two types of Monarchianism developed: the

Dynamic (or Adoptionist) and the Modalistic (or Sabellian).

Dynamic Monarchianism held that Jesus was only a mere man, perhaps miraculously conceived, but not God. The “dynamic” aspect of Monarchianism was that through the active process and works of God, Jesus was given the title “Son of God” simply by the divine wisdom and power with which he had been filled. This is why it is also called Adoptionist: because God adopted Jesus instead of being Jesus. This closely resembles the belief of many modern Unitarians, whom we gladly receive into Templary. When Jesus needed divine powers, God did the work for Jesus, instead of Jesus doing works of power on his own.

Modalistic Monarchianism took the view that God was not Trinitarian, but that God Himself came down as Christ, leaving Heaven for Earth. Modalists said that the names Father and Son were only different

february 2023

designations of the same subject, God. God essentially shifted from one state to another, expressing Himself in “modes” of a single unitary principle.

Sabellius was a third century minister who thought that God was only the Father, but he sometimes acted as the Son or as the Holy Spirit. Under this idea, God Himself was crucified and suffered (called Patripassianism – literally, “suffering of the Father”). However, this would mean that God was not in Heaven and the resurrection was a fable because God cannot die.

Some key dates for Monarchianism:

- c. 190s Monarchianism (emphasizing God’s monarchia, “unity” – not the three persons) spreads
- c. 200 Noetus condemned at Rome for Patripassianism, the teaching that the Father suffered as the Son
- c. 206 Praxeas, a priest in Rome from Asia Minor, starts widespread movement that leads to Sabellius’ final form.
- c. 213 Tertullian writes the tract *Adversus Praxean* (Against Praxeas), which carefully defended against the ideas of Monarchianism. This was an important contribution to the doctrine of the Trinity that the Council of Nicaea would later affirm (please read the Nicæan Creed).
- 268 Council of Antioch deposes Paul of Samosata and condemns Sabellianism (i.e., modalism: teaching that Father, Son, and Spirit are temporary manifestations of the same being)

By the early 300s, most Monarchianists become Arians.

Questions to ask:

- How do you really see God? When you close your eyes, do you imagine God as a little old man on a throne? As a young Jewish carpenter? As something else?
- How can you avoid falling into this monarchistic trap of thinking of God as distinct, separate parts?
- If God the Father is also God the Son, how do we avoid Patripassianism?

What does Monarchianism look like today?

Extreme monotheistic perspectives may miss the point of what monotheism is: belief in One God, even if in Three Persons. Monarchism includes people who proclaim that Jesus was not always God, but was a conduit of Divine information, confusing the teaching of the Trinity. Think about sermons that say something like: at the Baptism, Jesus finally became God or understood himself to be God. This is a weak form of monarchism but is still monarchistic heresy. Some well-known early Christians were modalists, they gave sermons that tried to explain the Trinity (St. Patrick and his clover leaf analogy, for example) positing that God is not really Three persons in Unity, but one person who changes appearance depending on the situation.

These two heresies, along with Ebionitism (discussed last month), account for a lot of the difficulties faced by the early Church and the constant wars and persecutions Christians faced from other Christians – as much as from external sources.

In the final installment of this series we will discuss the last five major categories of heresies. To God be all glory.



Eugene Blake Nichols

Grand Commander Massachusetts/Rhode Island



Jailson Santana

Grand Commander Brazil

Errata

We inadvertently omitted the oldest Grand Commandery in the Grand Encampment from the list of Grand Commanders in our December issue. Not to be outdone with this error, we also published the picture of the wrong Grand Commander for the Grand Commandery of Brasil. Sorry.



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NIGHT OF THE

THE FIRST OUTDOOR CONFERENCE

Atop the Llano Estacado (The Staked Plains), in the High Plains of the Texas Panhandle, sits a small asylum in Lubbock Texas. Lubbock Commandery No. 60 was once a thriving body of Sir Knights comprised of the who's who of community leaders, state and local politicians, businessmen, and giants of Texas Freemasonry.

The past few years have not been kind to this Commandery. Continued decline in Masonic membership, poor attendance generally, and then the onslaught of the COVID-19 pandemic compounded, driving Lubbock Commandery the way of the white buffalo which once roamed these vast plains – extinct.

For a betting man, the odds stack up against Lubbock. Any sensible player would have cashed in his chips and let the sun set upon this once great Commandery. Appar-

ently, no one told the Sir Knights of Lubbock how to properly play the game.

With proper inspiration, and excellent leadership, the winds have shifted. Grand Standard Bearer of Texas Grand Commandery, Sir Knight Ricky Cox, was one of the Sir Knights looking for a diamond in the rough. “Well, when I was told they were not standing inspection nor [conferring the] Order of the Temple during my previous year, and I had the opportunity to meet with Sir Knight Past Grand Commander of Texas, David Melear, and others from the area who wanted to help keep this commandery going, my suggestion was to put butts in the seats and the rest will take care of itself. Not only did they put butts in seats (for the inspection) and a candidate for the Order of the Temple, but the new knights along with the established Sir Knights stepped up and

THE TEMPLE BAR

RAL OF THE ORDERS IN TEXAS

by Zakary Wyatt

started creating an atmosphere that everyone wanted to be a part of.”

In a single calendar year they are on the cusp of knighting twenty new members, creating new fundraisers, creating a York Rite Blue Lodge School of instruction, and most recently, they hosted the first ever recorded outdoor Order of the Temple in the state of Texas.

To say that this outdoor order was a big achievement would be an understatement. In the realm of Freemasonry there isn’t much that is new anymore. Everything under the sun has essentially been done, including outdoor orders and degrees. However, with the picturesque sunsets and the celestial canopy that blanket West Texas, it is almost unthinkable that an order like this has not been put on before.

One summer night, while sitting in a

hotel room waiting on a pizza to be delivered, a few Sir Knights were teaching Sir Knight Richard Jernigan, Grand Commander of Texas, about social media, which has been a small part of their recent success. Through their discussions, the topic was brought up that Lubbock wanted an event that would help put them on the map.

Nobody expected Sir Knight Jernigan to say, “How about the first Texas Outdoor Order of the Temple?”

Twenty-four hours later a planning team was created, a task list was delegated, and the dreams kept getting bigger and bigger.

Sir Knight Christopher Bates, Past Commander of Lubbock Commandery, explained “I am the old part of Lubbock Commandery, what is left of it. Five of the members on this planning team, who barely have a year of York Rite under them, I top-

lined two of them. I say this, because it gives me a different perspective than that of the other outstanding new Knights I had the pleasure to work with during the planning of this event.”

Sir Knight Bates further explains, “I had noticed we had no outside involvement or outreach, and very little involvement outside the doors of our asylum. We had quarantined ourselves for the better part of the decade.... This was a great opportunity to implement a great masonic lesson, to keep our passions in due bounds. As dreams and ideas were put to paper, the best thing that could have happened was to be restricted on time, and to have a short deadline. This made us realize ambition and desire, to remove things that weren’t possible and focus on doing what we could do very well.”

The dreams that the Knights of Lubbock had were certainly big – as vast as that West Texas sky. There is a certain prestige that comes with being the first, but there is an honor that comes with being the best. From the moment the planning team first sat down, the question was asked: “Besides being outdoors, how can this order be bigger, better, and be more memorable while staying in the confines of committee on work?”

It is a Texas mindset; doing things bigger and better is in our DNA, and when the Grand Commander pulled out his calendar and set the date, the Sir Knights knew this was important to him. There is a lot of talk of doing things in Masonry; unfortunately, more often than not, complacency causes good intentions to fail. But the moment a date is set, it becomes real.

Sir Knight Richard Jernigan explained why the outdoor order was important to him. “To my knowledge it [outdoor Order of the Temple] had never been done [In Texas] before. Outdoor Master Mason degrees draw a lot of interest and attention to Masonry. I wanted that same result for Knights Templar.”



Focus has been a daily task throughout Sir Knight Richard Jernigan’s year as Grand Commander. From driving across the State of Texas several times a week to personally Knight new Sir Knights, to sharing his journey, jokes, and travel companions with the over 3,000 followers of the Grand Commandery of Texas Facebook page. “One focus this year has been to be visible and generate excitement. The Outdoor Order accomplished that.” He said.

The original plan was to find a field, far away from the road, do the order and go home. Until the Sir Knights realized something. Within Lubbock Commandery, the Sir Knights collectively garnish over 100,000 social media followers. This had to be much bigger, better than bringing a few guys to a field: They needed facilities, housing, food, and a backdrop that only God can provide.

Post, Texas, is a small West Texas town located forty minutes southeast from



Photos by Zakery Wyatt

Lubbock. With a population of 5,000, Post is not the typical destination spot. Post does however offer a fantastic view to the west of town. The Llano Estacado, a 600-foot shear drop into the prehistoric sea bed that once covered most of Texas.

This 600-foot climb expands from the oil fields of the Permian Basin to the nation's second largest canyon, Palo Duro Canyon, near Amarillo. In the formation of Texas, this area was once considered "No Man's Land." Comanche War tribes would hunt buffalo atop the plains, seek refuge, and find water in the vast canyon systems.

Only the bravest of pioneers, ranchers, and lawmen would attempt to traverse these great plains. Good men like Charles Goodnight, Oliver Loving, General Ranald S. Mackenzie, and even Albert Pike.

This is the history, the culture, and the excitement that Lubbock Commandery No. 60 desired to bring to the table. They found

it at Camp C.W. Post.

Camp Post provided the back drop, the facilities, the housing, the history, and plenty of space for the event. For some Sir Knights, the location meant a little more to them. Sir Knight Jeremiah Baumann, Sword Bearer for Lubbock Commandery, spoke of his experience with his son. "Camp Host holds a special place in my heart, as being involved in boy scouts with my son and all of the special moments we have had. Knowing the backdrop and the types of feeling the setting can bring forth, I knew this would be a great experience to share with my Brothers, Companions, and fellow Sir Knights."

And what an experience the event was! The moment the team arrived on site Friday afternoon, until the clean-up crew left Sunday afternoon, the weekend was filled with fun, fellowship, and Masonry.

Out of all the moments of the weekend, one of the most breathtaking scenes was a

moment that almost didn't happen. The lone Knight Templar, riding across the West Texas Plains, with the setting sun behind him.

This is a moment that Sir Knight Dustin Delano created in his promotional flyers, and it was an image that the planning team had dreamed about until just a few days before the event.

Unfortunately, the horses that were originally planned were subject to a vehicle crash. Thankfully, the horses and Brothers in the vehicle came out unscathed, but the animals weren't particularly keen on being around people, or getting in a trailer any time soon.

Just like all the other big ideas that just couldn't make the cut, Lubbock Commandery informed everyone who needed to know that the horses would just have to wait and make an appearance next year.

That is until Sir Knight Ricky Cox found out about the accident. "Sir Knights of olden days rode horses into battle carrying the banner to let the friends of Christ know they were fair and favorable and to warn the enemies of Christ they were dark and terrible. The symbolism today still stands in the hearts of all Knight Templar as we strive to emulate love and loyalty to the Christian faith as the ones we portray all through allegory and symbolism like the lessons in the Craft lodge."

With symbolism like that, Sir Knight Cox took it upon himself to bring a horse, creating an image that will be passed on to future Sir Knights for generations. "The opportunity was amazing, fun, and images of the crusades were going through my head along with duty and honor to the Order," he said.

The Order must have been pleasing to God as well, as he blessed Texas Commandery with amazing weather. West Texas is known for its howling winds and random haboobs. As the Knights settled into the amphitheater the wind calmed down and

became eerily still. The coyotes could be heard howling and yelping off in the distance as the prayers were being read, and the crickets seemed to be chirping with our heartbeats as the Order progressed forward.

The only surprise was a lone moth that seemed to fly a little too close to a candle during an important part of the Order, but even that seemed to pull the Sir Knights closer. This experience will leave a huge impact in the Texas York Rite and Texas Templary.

"I know it's fresh in our minds right now, but I am hearing a lot talk from Sir Knights that they wish they could have been there." Sir Knight Jernigan, Grand Commander, explained. "They also can't wait to see it done again. Anything that brings attention to our Order – especially one that appeals to the hearts of our members – will have an impact. Men want to join a group that serves a greater purpose and can be seen having fun. This did both."

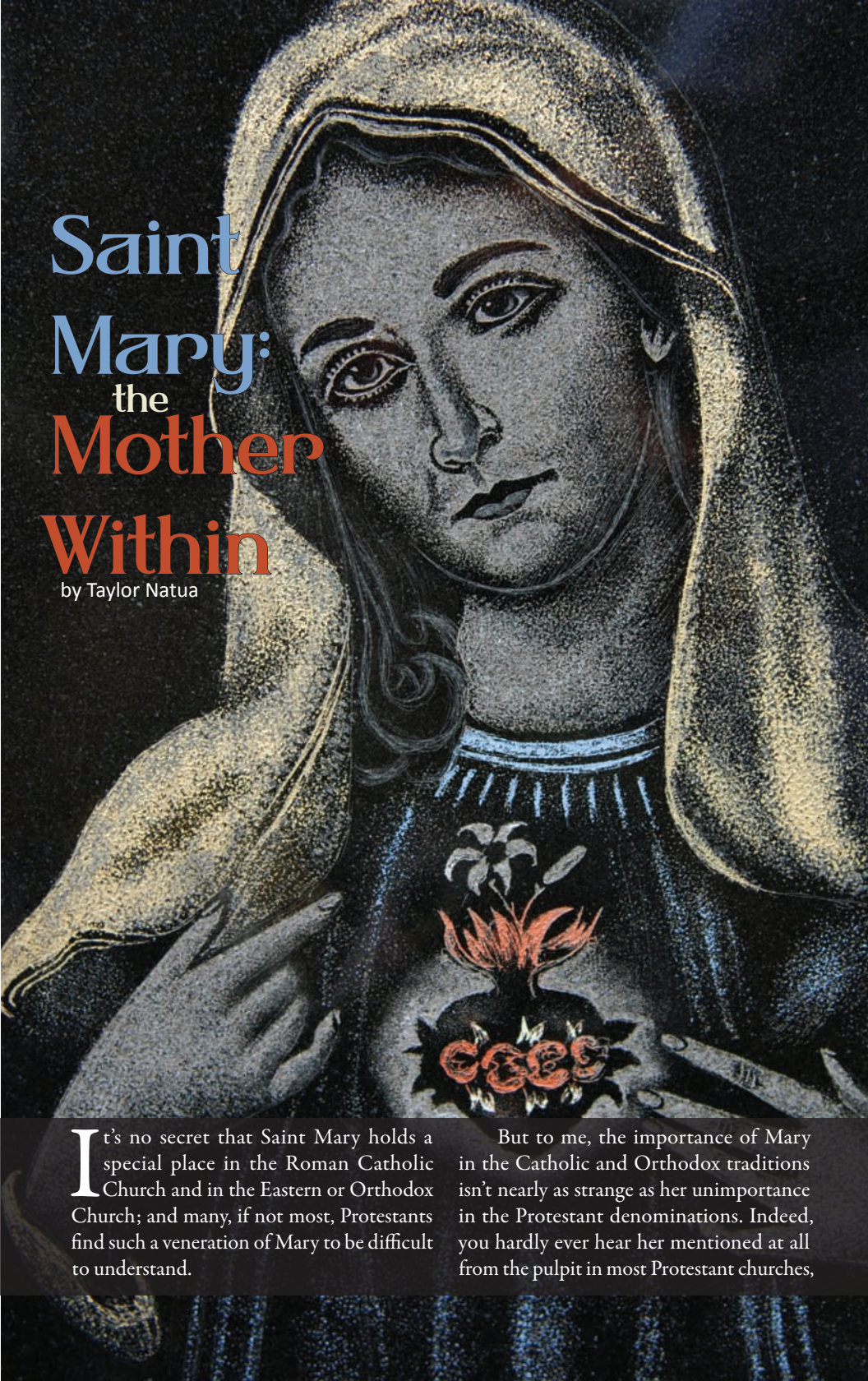
The big question is, will there be another outdoor Order next year? If the Lubbock Commandery planning team has their way, indeed. The team took less than four days off before they started putting pen to paper to make next year's outdoor Order bigger, better, and even family friendly.

They are reaching out to everyone they know for sponsorships, donations, and even volunteers to be a part of next year's order.

There will be no official statement until after Texas's Grand Conclave, but you can rest assured that whatever Lubbock Commandery No. 60 comes up with, it will strive to preserve and honor the history of the Knights Templar while brining excitement and inspiration for the future of York Rite Masonry.

*Non nobis, Domine, non nobis, sed
Nomini Tuo da gloriam!*





Saint Mary: the Mother Within

by Taylor Natua

It's no secret that Saint Mary holds a special place in the Roman Catholic Church and in the Eastern or Orthodox Church; and many, if not most, Protestants find such a veneration of Mary to be difficult to understand.

But to me, the importance of Mary in the Catholic and Orthodox traditions isn't nearly as strange as her unimportance in the Protestant denominations. Indeed, you hardly ever hear her mentioned at all from the pulpit in most Protestant churches,

aside from when the Nativity story is retold around Christmastime. Surely she deserves more mention than this, even if you don't think she ought to occupy the lofty station she has in the Roman Catholic Church?

Every Roman Catholic is intimately familiar with the *Ave Maria*, or "Hail Mary" prayer. Particularly those who pray the Rosary. Aside from the Our Father, *i.e.* the Lord's Prayer, it's probably the most important prayer in the Catholic tradition. But Catholics aren't the only people to use this prayer, nor are they the only Christians who pray the Rosary. You'll find a version of the Hail Mary in the Orthodox tradition. And though there are some Lutherans, Anglicans/Episcopalians, and even Methodists who make use of prayer beads in their personal devotions as well, the wording of their prayers typically omit the Hail Mary – an indispensable feature in the Catholic Rosary. If you are unfamiliar with the Hail Mary, it goes like this:

[Latin] Ave Maria, gratia plena,
Dominus tecum.
Benedicta tu in mulieribus,
et benedictus fructus ventris tui, Iesus.
Sancta Maria, Mater Dei,
ora pro nobis peccatoribus,
nunc, et in hora mortis nostrae. Amen.

[English] Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou amongst women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Whether we are Catholics, Orthodox, Anglicans, Episcopalians, Methodists (like myself), Protestants, or even Christians at all, I think we can all appreciate the profound

meaning Saint Mary imparts. Whether or not you believe her story to be literally true, let's look at what's true about it in a symbolic sense at the very least. Let's look at what's universally true in it. Whether or not her story actually happened once upon a time in history, let's look at how it's happening all the time in the here and now.

For me, in addition to the literal understanding of Mary being the Mother of Jesus, Mary is also an archetype representing humility, grace, wisdom, courage, indomitable faith, nurturing love, and a willingness to surrender to God's will. She illustrates the resounding *yes* to God that we all ought to utter at every moment. She personifies the ultimate diminution of the ego; making less room for her own agenda and more room for God within herself. She is the anthropomorphic portrayal of a pure heart, embodying the essence of the words, "Here am I, Lord. What would you have me do? Not my will, but Thine be done." That's something we must all say. Like Saint Mary, we all must have a pure heart open to the will of God.

The body is a temple, and a pure heart is the Holy of Holies wherein the Shekinah, God's indwelling Spirit, can fill the void remaining wherein we have sufficiently reduced the ego. There, in the womb of the pure, virgin-like heart, Christ is immaculately conceived; He is born in us, changing us from the inside out. When Love becomes incarnate in us, the Word is made flesh.

"Let us meditate on the example of heavenly resignation given to us by 'the Mother of Sorrows.' And, like her, let us always say, 'Here is the servant of the Lord.' Just as Jesus was 'the fruit of her womb,' we too, following the teachings of the eternal Wisdom that the Virgin represents, give birth to God in our souls. He will be born there when He finds a temple worthy of receiving Him, puri-

fied of passion and lust, stripped of greed, ennobled by the acceptance of the cross and inhabited by love. And this birth will be our regeneration.”¹

Now that we’ve looked at a deep, inner interpretation of Mary’s role as a symbol in the Christian tradition, let’s circle back and take another look at the literal interpretation of her story. It, too, is quite profound.

In an era when a young woman would have been disgraced if the public were to discover she had conceived a child out of wedlock – especially while betrothed to another man – it took great courage to say yes to the message that the Angel Gabriel delivered to her. She was a young Jewish girl, a virgin, betrothed to a man named Joseph, and suddenly an angel appears to tell her that she’ll soon immaculately conceive the very Son of the Most High. Pause for a moment to consider all the implications of such an incredible proposition! Just think of the anxiety that would go through the minds of most young women in her position after hearing something like that, particularly during that era. She was surely worried about what her fiancé, Joseph, would think. She likely feared that he’d break off the engagement and leave her disgraced. She was undoubtedly concerned about the likelihood of being ostracized by her community, knowing well that few people would believe her incredible story. And yet, in spite of all those legitimate concerns, she said yes anyway. What God had asked her to do was not convenient, and it certainly was not easy. But she said yes nonetheless. Mary said, “Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.” (Luke 1:38 NRS) Her trust in God was greater than her own self-interests, and her love for God was greater than her fears! She was most definitely a remarkable woman. A remarkable human being. A Saint.



A shining example of what faith – trusting God with one’s whole heart – looks like.

Now think about the latter part of her story, after Jesus had grown up. We’ve all seen the kind of love that mothers have for their children. The bond between mother and child is strong beyond words. If everyday mothers love and adore their flawed children as much as they manifestly do, how much more must Mary have loved her flawless, blameless child who was the incarnate embodiment of God’s Love?

All mothers suffer pains of empathy when they see their children suffer. How much more did Mary, the Mother of our Lord, suffer when she saw her perfect child ostracized, tortured, and killed in a most cruel and ignominious manner? Most mothers feel pity for their children when they cry out because of something so simple as a doctor piercing their flesh with a needle to administer a vaccine for their own good. Can you imagine the immeasurable pity that

1. Paul Sédar, *Prayer*, p. 20, published by Rose Circle Books, translated by Piers A. Vaughan.



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Mary must have felt for her son, Jesus, when he cried out because of executioners piercing his hands and feet with iron nails? And not for his own good, but for the inconceivable good of the world!

The world He came to save rejected Him, killed him, and yet He pleaded with the Father to forgive us all. What unimaginable Love did He embody for us despite enduring such horrendous suffering at our hands! And what unimaginable faith did Mary have in spite of having witnessed her Son enduring such suffering! She suffered there at the foot of the cross in a way that we can hardly comprehend, if indeed we can comprehend it at all.

The emotional pain of seeing her child suffer so horribly would be an insufferable burden for any mother to bear, much less the mother of one who is the pure and innocent benefactor of humankind. But she suffered and bore it, nevertheless. She accepted her suffering and bore the weight of her own

cross, watching her precious Son die on his cross, with an unshakable faith; firmly believing (though it must have been so hard) that it was all part of a plan greater and wiser than her own. Though it must have been difficult to trust and believe that any good plan could possibly require such immense suffering, she trusted and believed nevertheless. What an example of emotional, mental, and spiritual fortitude Mary is! If we had just a fraction of her faith and fortitude, there would be no earthly trials we couldn't overcome.

Now let's take a look at her from yet another perspective, one which is highly symbolic. Figurative and literal all at once. Just as the Ark of the Covenant carried the presence of God in the Tabernacle and old Temple, Mary carried the presence of God in her own womb. She is the new Ark of the New Covenant. Let that sink in.

The old Ark of the Covenant carried the Book of the Law (the Torah), Aaron's Rod, and a Pot of Manna within it: Relics representing God's presence and attributes. The Book of the Law represents the Wisdom of God; the Rod of Aaron that budded represents the Power/Strength of God; and the Pot of Manna represents the providential Beauty of God. The Book of the Law represents the Omniscience of God, the Rod represents the Omnipotence of God, and the Manna represents the Omnipresence of God. God is infinitely wise/knowning, infinitely strong/powerful, and infinitely beautiful/present. And these three infinite attributes of God were symbolically contained within a three-dimensional box representing creation: the Ark of the Covenant. But you see all those same attributes illustrated in Jesus, embodied in his very person. Jesus is the Wisdom, the "Logos," the Word, of God incarnate in a human person. Jesus, who can raise the dead and perform all manner of miracles, is the Strength/Power of God incarnate in a human person. Jesus is the very Presence of



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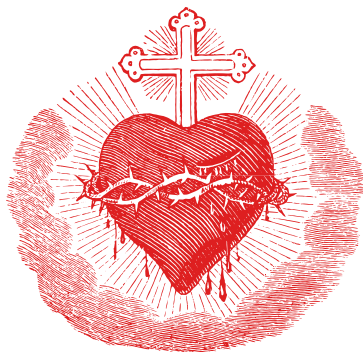
God incarnate in a human person. He is the new Book of the Law, the Law of Love. He is the new symbol of the Priesthood (like Aaron's Rod), and he is also the new Manna. Indeed, he is the Bread of Life. (John 6:35.) Those who feasted on the manna that fell from Heaven in the wilderness were always in need of more; but whosoever partakes of the bread that Jesus represents will never hunger again. Jesus is Immanuel, "God with us"; and Mary, the new Ark of the new Covenant, carried God's divine presence into the world in the form of a human being. Through Mary, the blessed virgin, by the will of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, the Word became flesh!

Whether you are a Catholic who prays to Mary in hopes that she'll intercede with her Son on your behalf or a Protestant who prays only to God directly, hopefully my words here have persuaded you to see more in Mary than you had seen before. More than just the earthly mother of our Lord, she's also a Saint, an archetype of the first magnitude, and an iconic symbol of great importance

within the Christian tradition. May we all endeavor to embody the virtues which are so beautifully personified by her!

There was an incredible human being named Mary who lived in Judaea two thousand years ago, but there's also an archetypal Mary who lives here – now and always. She is within you, a part of you, residing and abiding with God at the deepest, purest, innermost level of your being.

Mary, the Divine Mother within, is alive and well in every heart that says yes to God.



Knights at the Bookshelf

George Marshall on *Heaven on Earth: The Lives and Legacies of the World's Greatest Cathedrals* by Emma J. Wells

Published by INTERART, 2022, Softbound, 512 pages, ISBN-13: 978-1788541947

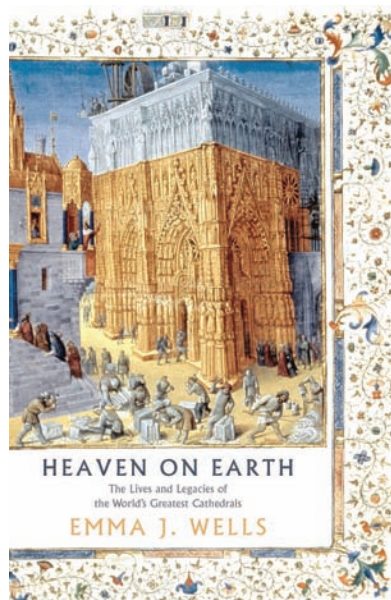
From the Fellowcraft degree we learn “Our ancient brethren wrought in operative as well as speculative Masonry. We work in speculative only.”

While modern Masonry is indeed speculative in nature, it certainly is worthwhile and fascinating to study and examine the handiwork of our ancient brethren, which this book aptly exemplifies in its presentation of several famous medieval cathedrals.

This book takes us on a vivid tour of sixteen of the world's most famous cathedrals, such as Istanbul's Hagia Sophia, Notre Dame in Paris, Chartres in France, and others in Florence, Italy, and in England: Wells, York, Salisbury, and Westminster, among others. The timespan covered is from the Byzantine in the sixth century to Europe in the fourteenth century, and style types are predominantly Norman (Romanesque) and Gothic. But rather than being just another dry history book, the text explores ways in which these edifices represented architectural attempts to connect mankind with divinity. Although her subtitle promises a portrait of “the world's greatest cathedrals,” her scope is much more specific. The book is lavishly illustrated with current photographs and historical images that accompany and enhance each chapter.

In summary: this is a beautiful book that is well-researched and well written, with stunning illustrations. Dr. Wells weaves the incredible stories of these places into a fascinating narrative that maintains our interest from start to finish.

It's a fascinating look at how commerce, knight templar



civil authorities, labor, and clergy in the Middle Ages combined spirituality, symbolism, mathematical principles, and immense toil to create some of history's finest and most enduring structures.

Note: For the interested reader, another excellent book on the topic of cathedrals is one by Robert A. Scott, *The Gothic Enterprise: A Guide to Understanding the Medieval Cathedral*, University of California Press, 2011.

BEAUCEANT



At the Official Visit to Cleveland Assembly No. 15, Lakewood, OH, Nov. 12, 2022. Worthy President, Ms. Kimberly Burnett.



At the Official Visit to East Liverpool Assembly No. 71, East Liverpool, OH, Nov. 11, 2022. Worthy President, (Mrs. Howard) Clara McClure.



At the Official Visit to Warren Assembly No. 77, North East Warren, OH, Nov. 11, 2022.
Worthy President, (Mrs. John) Joann Stuart.



At the Official Visit to Columbus Assembly No. 79, Westerville, OH, Nov. 3, 2022. Worthy
President, (Mrs. Dan) Joyce Cogley and Candidate, (Mrs. David P) Rosemarie Welch.



KTEF 55th Voluntary Campaign

The 55th Campaign is now well under way, and I am pleased to see what we are accomplishing. It is encouraging, I hope we can keep up the good work. Of course, with your continued effort and dedication to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation we can be assured of a good result. As of December 1st, the Grand Commandery of Ohio is ranked number one, Pennsylvania is ranked number two, Georgia ranked three, and Texas is coming along in fourth position. There is no doubt that competition is good, and we encourage all to compete. In the end, the Eye Foundation is the winner.

Contributions from the direct mail campaign have been coming in at an excellent rate. Thank you for sending in your contribution. The success of the 55th Annual Voluntary Campaign depends on the continued generous support of all Sir Knights, the local Commanderies, and the Grand Commanderies. Remember this Voluntary Campaign will end April 30th. All contributions received in the Eye Foundation office at Flower Mound, TX, postmarked on or before May 15th will be counted.

Other ways to raise money for the Foundation include asking your York Rite College, KYCH, and Red Cross of Constantine to donate. The local bodies of these organizations which I belong to donate each year. You never can go wrong by asking.

Another successful idea is to seek out other foundations such as family foundations

or company foundations. Just tell them the excellent work we do and ask them to consider us.

There are many ways to raise funds, do not be afraid to try new things. Remember, they can only say no. I like what the late Sir Knight W. Clement Stone said, "TAKE THE SHOT! Where there is nothing to lose by trying and great deal to gain if successful, by all means

TRY!"


To all Grand Commandery State Eye Foundation Chairman – you should have access to Masonic Membership Solutions (MMS). If you do not already, ask your Grand Recorder. He can direct you through the process of getting an MMS User Id and getting access. MMS is a great tool to help you coordinate with your local Commandery Chairman.

As always, please feel free to contact the Eye Foundation office or any officer of the Grand Encampment for any assistance that you require.

And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

Colossians 3:17

In Christ Service,



Paul W. Friend, PGC, KTCH
Chairman, 55th Annual Voluntary Campaign

Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Inc.

October 1, 2022 – October 31, 2022

GRAND MASTER'S CLUBS

AL Gregory K. Parnell	PA Edward J. Martin
AZ Arno Warnke	PA Lee W. McCombs
CA Lucien A. Bone Jr.	PA David W. Park
CA Barrie R. Copp	PA Nicholas J. Williams Jr.
IL Donald H. Frenzl	SC Garland R. Harman
IN Joe F. Gust	SC Larry J. Nicodin
KY Barton E. Wilber	SD Michael R. Argenziano
LA Billy E. Barnes	SD Bruce A. Crisman
LA Joseph A. Giroir III	TN Thomas Q. Bolden
MN Charles M. Crosby	TN Christopher J. Cluck
MO David N. Appleby	TN Fred E. Scott
NJ Herbert R. Wood	TN Robert W. Waldron Sr.
NV Thomas A. Whitcomb	TX Charles E. Campbell
NC William T. Highsmith Jr.	TX James M. Medlock
OH Roger L. Clarke	UT Lonnie M. McCulloch
OH Roy A. Dray	VA William Searcy III
OH Kyle A. Markel	VA Alan S. Truax
PA James D. Amos	

GRAND COMMANDER'S CLUBS

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CA Lucien A. Bone Jr.	PA Michael M. Williamson
CA Michael S. Cortez	TX Todd R. Alexander
FL Stephen L. Karr	TX Charles E. Campbell
GA James G. Mashburn	VA Joel T. Bundy
MI Steve J. Guillory	VA Alan S. Truax
MI Clifford T. Wimmer Jr.	WI Richard J. Rausch
NC Steven A. Wilson	

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