

Knights Templar Magazine January 2022 Maryland supplement

A new year begins. Welcome Fraters to 2022!

As the New Year is usually a time of reflection and planning, let me first offer everyone hopes that your Christmas was good, and you were able to be with your friends and especially family. This has been a time of some illness and I know that some of you may have passed a holiday with less than normal activity because you or loved ones were not up to it. I had a covid booster shot on Wednesday before Christmas and paid for it by having all of the next day a blur of pain, chills and fatigue, just as those vaccines before had treated me. Fortunately, I got over it in time to spend Christmas eve with Children and Grand Children staying the night, having a splendid meal together and then opening gifts with lots of laughter and discovery. One thing we discovered is one cannot have enough batteries at Christmas!

The following day we sent one daughter/son-in-law and a couple of those cherubs on their way, but our other daughter, her man and 2 more delightful children remained to spend the day. We took the opportunity of pretty good weather to drive to South Mountain on the Appalachian Trail, to hike to the George Washington Monument. This is the earliest of all memorial structures built to remember our founding father and 1st President. If you ever have the opportunity, it is a great view overlooking Boonsboro, Hagerstown, Sharpsburg (think Antietam battlefield), and one can see on a clear day to West (by God) Virginia. There were a few others with the same idea, and it is never a miss for any of the Appalachian Trail travelers Hiking through. As a matter of fact, one cannot fail, as it is on the trail and only a few steps aside to catch the view of the grand valley which the tower overlooks. An interesting place in history as one thinks about George Washington, a surveyor in his youth, who traveled to these areas, and was also a battleground in the civil war. Lots of opportunities for discovery here.

Discovery is a theme we can use for reflecting on our recent past and planning for our immediate future in our Knightly endeavors. This past 2 years has seen very little opportunity for us to gather as Knights Templar, as I mentioned in a previous message, we are only just beginning to open our Asylums to full Conclaves and begin to practice our craft. There is Plenty of need for planning our future endeavors and things to look forward to. Please keep a lookout on the website [-yorkritemaryland.org-](http://yorkritemaryland.org) for updates to events, calendar, and there will be some new sites dedicated to Quartermaster, Grand Prelate and others for information. We'll be communicating much to you through that resource. You will see a list of upcoming Grand Visitations to Commanderies now posted. Other dates include a special Conclave at the Gothic room at Grand Lodge on Feb. 7th, our Semi - annual Grand Conclave on May 14th. Opportunities for New Knight training and practices for the Orders, updates on uniform information, as well as committee goals will soon appear. Your Grand Officers will be preparing many useful events and opportunities for Subordinate Commandery interaction as we prep ourselves to pass along much needed assistance to our Fraters.

Our February Special Conclave is to review the details of Grand Encampment Triennial votes that took place in August of this last year in Minneapolis Minnesota. There were quite a few (36) votes that were taken, some of which, will require a bit of action on our part in this New

Year. We must present those items for your review prior to a vote at the Semi-annual Conclave in May. Our jurisprudence Committee is preparing the information for your review at that meeting. One item that may be of interest to some, is the ability offered by the Grand Encampment to bring back an ancient KT apron. The Grand Encampment has allowed each State the opportunity to determine if they would like to approve the wearing of such an apron at Conclaves. We'll describe and discuss this option as well as the Grand Lodge of Maryland's requirements, if adopted, for use.

Another item which will be discussed is the upcoming Grand Encampment special Conclave to be held in Indiana in March. There have been many recent mailings and emails sent to you regarding this 'Call to Conclave' and we'll give you an opportunity to hear and to comment on what Maryland may wish to do about this event.

I know we have just wound up a Knights Templar Christian activity the celebration of Christmas and the birth of our Savior, and most of us had opportunity to attend a Christmas observance in our Asylums or online. But let's all plan the next big event in our Christian lives by preparing to celebrate the Resurrection of Jesus at the upcoming Easter Sunrise service at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in Alexandria Virginia. Many of you have taken part in this annual event. Most of you know that the Grand Encampment has, for the past several years, held two other ceremonies at alternate locations in the Midwest and western parts of the country. This year will see a return to only one site being host to this spectacular service.

Right here in our area is the location, that Templars from across the U.S. as well as other countries, will gather to celebrate the resurrection of the Son of God. We hope to have an excellent turn out and will be assisting where we can with Bus trips from one or more locations. Please contact me if you have an interest in carpooling and or using a bus to transport your members. I am thinking Eastern Shore, Western Maryland and Baltimore areas would be beneficial if there is ample interest.

A Christmas gift- For the Officers of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Maryland I have given a gift. All by now should have received it by my hand or in the mail. Many of you attended the Baltimore Commandery's Christmas Observance. Those in attendance received the following explanation from me at that time.

The gift is in the form of a pair of Cuff Links in the shape of a black Templar Shield emblazoned with a silver sword. The symbolism of this gift - As Mary the mother bore from her womb, Jesus Christ, from God to man, his only son, to shield us from our sins- So too should we as Knights Templar bear our own shields to protect those unfortunate and downtrodden of the world. The Shape of the Silver Templar sword is also that of the Cross which we wield in the fight for Truth in the name of our Lord.

God bless all of Maryland's Valiant Knights Templars and I wish you all a successful, Happy and Healthy New Year.

REGC, John H. Austin

