



Pennsylvania Crusader

GRAND COMMANDERY OF PENNSYLVANIA
pagrandcommandery.org

S.K. Mark G. Mattern, Grand Commander

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Greetings Sir Knights,

The New Year has welcomed us in, but how this year will turn out is yet to be seen. You have been doing great work during this Templar year and dealing with the looming threat of COVID. Please keep up the good work and be safe while doing so.

2021 struck us with the loss of some good friends and Sir Knights. While we mourn their loss, I have no doubt that they are already forging the way ahead to greet us when our time comes to join them in the asylum above, the house not made by human hands. Continue to honor their memory with the good work that continues in your Commandery.

On December 27, 2021 I was privileged to be present at the Annual Communication of the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania and the Installation of the new Right Worshipful Grand Master, Brother and Sir Knight Jeffrey M. Wonderling. Both Brother Wonderling and Brother Gamon, RWPGM, have been very supportive of Templary here in Pennsylvania and want to see the great things we have been doing continue into the future. I have assured the Grand Master that the Knights Templar stand ready to assist him. Brother

Sir Knights it is now time to look ahead. It is hard to believe that in less than 140 days my term as Grand Commander will come to an end, but my service to this Grand Commandery will not. We still have many exciting things to get done to move Templary in Pennsylvania forward. During the Annual Conclave this year we will celebrate 225 years of Knights Templar in Pennsylvania. To mark this historic event SK Harry J. Smith, DGC, and I will be selling a 225th Anniversary Malta Jewel for just \$20.00 (picture at the bottom of page 2). The proceeds from this jewel will benefit Pennsylvania DeMolay, which coincidentally will be celebrating their 100th Anniversary in 2023. You can contact myself or SK Smith to get one of these special jewels that may be worn for the remainder of my term (GO11), and through SK Smith's expected term.

Easter Sunrise weekend in Alexandria, VA is coming up on April 16th and 17th. If you haven't been there before, what are you waiting for. On the 16th, at 11:15, I will be laying a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. A ceremony that has special meaning to me since my uncle is buried at Arlington Cemetery. On the 17th will be the Easter Sunrise ceremony at the George Washington Masonic Memorial which is always a great event.

The Annual Conclave of the Grand Commandery will take place May 19-22 at the Marriott on Penn Square in Lancaster. Lady Jodi and I hope you can join us as we meet together again to take care of the business of the Grand Commandery, celebrate the beginning of our 225th year, and install the Grand Officers for the next Templar year who will continue to lead us forward.

While these times are tenuous and concerning as far as the health of our world and the outlook of our Nation, I think it is an exciting time to be a Knights Templar. We need more support and members to help our cause and spread the values that make this a truly Great organization. An elite organization. One that can assist in getting our communities, on Nation, and the world back to a place of peace and harmony where we can all the grace of what God has given us during our short time in this part of our existence. Enjoy every day, make the best of every situation, find the best in you and pass it on.

May God bless you and your family during 2022 and may God bless Templary, Freemasonry and the USA.

Yours in Templary,
Mark G. Mattern, REGC

A Letter from the Associate Grand Prelate:

On New Year's Day, 2022, the ball drops in Times Square. The crowd counts down! The welcoming in a new year brings in a fresh start in friendships and opportunities.

For all its excitement, though, a new year can be unsettling, none of us knows the future or what storms it may hold. Many New Year's traditions reflect this.

Fireworks were invented in China to supposedly ward off evil spirits and make a new season prosperous. New Year's resolutions date back to the Babylonians who made vows to appease their gods. Such acts were an attempt to make an unknown future secure.

When they weren't making vows, the Babylonians were busy conquering people – including Israel. In time, God sent the enslaved Jews this message "Do not fear...when you pass through the waters, I will be with you". Later, Jesus said something similar when He and the disciples were caught sailing in a violent storm. "Why are you so afraid?" He told them before commanding the waters to be still.

Today we push out from the shore into new, uncharted waters. Whatever we face, He is with us and He has the power to calm the waves.

Yours in Christ,
Rev. S.K. Richard M. Barner, AGP

