

Templars of the Plains

A Publication of the Grand Commandery of Kansas

Send submissions to Editor SK Patrick C. Carr, PEC — carrs@cox.net



April, 2024

William Leonard, REGC 2023-2024

He is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!

Sir Knight Patrick C. Carr, Eminent Grand Captain General

The Right Eminent Grand Commander has asked the current Grand Commandery Officers to write articles for this supplement.



The inaugural Easter Sunrise Service for the Grand Commandery of Kansas was held at Coronado Heights near Lindsborg, Kansas and commenced at approximately 7:00 AM. There were approximately 50 Sir Knights and their ladies and children present for this beautiful service. This is the first of these services and what we hope will continue to be a tradition.

The Commissioned Templar Chaplains of Kansas, Sir Knights Patrick Carr, Gary Strout, and Andrew Mosley, organized the event and received assistance from Sir Knights Justin Crippen, Mark Mock, and Glenn Davis. Others who were instrumental in the service included our ladies from the Social Order Of the Beauceant, Judy DeTevis and Abbey Mosley. There were visitors from the Grand Commandery of Oklahoma as well. The event concluded with a sumptuous breakfast at McPherson Lodge No. 172.



The service included an address from the Right Eminent Grand Commander, Bill Leonard, responsive readings, scripture readings, prayers, hymns, and a sermon delivered by Sir Knight Patrick Carr, CTC.

It was a beautiful service and we hope this will become a tradition here in Kansas. The castle in the background made for a wonderful Knight Templar event.



Empty Promises

The 2024 East Sunrise Service Sermon—Delivered by Sir Knight Patrick C. Carr, CTC

The sun is up, and the weather is quite pleasant for March day here in Kanas. What a blessed morning we have had so far, as we have gathered here on the Sabbath to celebrate the risen Savior! Our risen Savior! He who has come to save the world from its sins. Blessed be to God for providing use with such a beautiful Savior and the ability to gather here on this, one of our holiest of days in the Christian calendar, to worship Him!

I love reading the book of Isaiah. This prophet had such a handle on what was happening in the world around him during his time on earth. He also completely understood the work God was preparing to do for the Jewish nation, and for the entire world. We read in Isaiah chapter 53 the prophecy of the coming Savior. Isaiah speaks at length about how the Christ would be born and grow right before our very eyes. This Christ had not yet arrived on earth, yet Isaiah was convinced by his belief in the blessing of God that the Christ he prophesied of would one day arrive and bless everyone. Isaiah continued and assured his readers the world would eventually turn their back upon this savior. They would



shun He who had come to redeem the world from its sins. This Savior Isaiah spoke of was not one who would be worshipped by the world for his beauty or for his grace. No, in a completely different situation this Savior was to be presented to the world. He was going to be rejected by his people. He was to be scorned by those around him. He was going to be beaten, to be stabbed, wounded, and to bleed. He was born to suffer. This was to be done for all of us! None of this was created or performed for a theatrical production or for some minor point to be made in history and quickly forgotten or put aside. It was not going to occur as a passing event in the history of this world. No, everything Isaiah had prophesied was going to come true and, through his prophecy, we see how we are continually healed through the wounds of Christ! Isaiah made no empty promises in his

prophecy. It was quite the opposite. Isaiah was telling the world exactly what would happen to the savior who was yet to appear for the purpose of triumphing over death and saving everyone from sin.

As people, we make promises every day. There are times when our promises sometimes become weak and are easily laid aside. We are each guilty of making empty promises. An empty promise is a commitment which is made but has relatively no chance of being fulfilled. Isaiah's promises were anything but empty. Indeed, they were quite the opposite! We realize from the beautiful gospels provided to us in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, just how accurate Isaiah's prophetic promises were and how they would indeed come to fruition. Through the perfect plan of God Our Father, Isaiah's promises would be fulfilled with the birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension, of our Jesus, our Lord, and Savior!



Once there were three turtles, Joe, Steve, and Poncho, who decided to go on a picnic. Joe packs the picnic basket with cookies, bottled sodas, and sandwiches. The trouble is, the picnic site is 10 miles away, and being turtles, it would take 10 whole days to get there. By the time they finally arrived, everyone was tired and hungry. Joe takes the food out of the basket, one by one. He takes out the sodas and immediately realizes they forgot to bring a bottle opener. Joe and Steve beg Poncho to turn back home and retrieve the bottle opener, but Poncho flatly refuses, knowing the others will eat everything by the time he gets back. Somehow, after about two hours of pleading, the turtles manage to convince Poncho to go, swearing on their great-grand turtles' graves that they won't touch the food while he is gone. So, Poncho sets off down the road, slow and steady. Twenty days have passed, but no Poncho. Joe and Steve are hungry and puzzled, but a promise is a promise. Another day passes, and still no sign of Poncho, but a promise is a promise. After three more days pass without Poncho in sight, Steve starts getting restless. "I NEED FOOD!" he says with a hint of urgency in his voice. "NO!" Joe retorts. "We promised." Five more days pass slowly. Joe finally came to the realization that Poncho probably skipped out to the restaurant down the road, and just went home, so the two turtles weakly lifted the lid, pulled out a sandwich, and opened their mouths to eat. But then, right at that very instant, Poncho pops out from behind a rock and says, "Just for that, I'm not going."

A promise is a promise indeed, but emptiness can produce situations which cause us to break our promises. Emptiness seems to follow us throughout our lives. Emptiness leaves us lonely, and seeking solace in something which will fill us or fulfill our needs. There are times when being empty can be viewed as something very, very good. John's gospel gives us images of many empty things. First of all, we view the empty cross. Jesus was no longer present up on that cross. He had died for our sins and his body had been removed from the cross. The empty cross, therefore, symbolizes our belief in the fulfillment of the promise which is yet to come. Death has no control over those who believe in Christ Jesus and accept his plan of salvation. The empty cross stands as a testament to our belief in the resurrection of the body and the immortality of the soul. It points us continually towards our faith in the Risen Savior whose sacrifice paved the way for the salvation of the world.

John continues by reminding us in chapter 20, verse 5 the empty strips of linen which Jesus was wrapped in and the cloth which covered his body, were lying in the tomb, yet the body of Jesus was nowhere to be found. Simon Peter had been summoned by Mary Magdalene to the open tomb because she saw the stone

had been rolled away from the entrance. During this time period, an incident like this would indicate someone had robbed the tomb. Even though there was little of material value within the tomb of Jesus, someone still could have taken his body and removed it from the area. Simon Peter returned with Mary and discovered the strips of linen Jesus had been wrapped in were indeed empty, but they had been laying where Jesus had been laid. Even the cloth which had covered Jesus was there. Interestingly enough, it had been folded and placed separate from the strips of linen. Again, the cloth was empty of any evidence of the body of Jesus being in the tomb.

John continues to tell us that Simon Peter and Mary Magdalene were unable to discover the body of Jesus anywhere within the tomb. Mary had told Simon Peter, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they had put him!" After a search of the tomb, Simon Peter was still unable to locate the body of Jesus. The tomb was, for all intents and purposes, truly empty. This empty tomb would seem to be a terrifying instance within the life of the Church and for its followers. I would imagine Simon Peter and Mary Magdalene had an emptiness within their hearts when they discovered the body of their Jesus had gone missing and could not be found anywhere.



But we know the empty tomb is necessary. Because of the empty tomb, we know Jesus arose from the land of the dead and returned to the land of the living. Jesus lives! The empty tomb is but a vessel. A symbol. Something we should look to as we remember the promises of God which were fulfilled by the death of his Son, Jesus! He is the Christ! He is risen! He is risen indeed! Death has no more dominion over those who would accept Christ as their personal Lord and Savior. We no longer fear death. It has no control.

Emptiness is not always something to worry over. Our bank accounts may become empty. Our stomachs may growl when empty of food. Our lives may look bleak and empty because of the many trials and tribulations incident to human life and existence. But we know these are for just a small time. A passing moment within each of our lives. We can rely on the emptiness of the cross, the cloth, and the tomb, as something to look forward to. Something we can celebrate! Thus, emptiness can be celebrated. Because of the emptiness God provided by the resurrection of Jesus, we can rest assured we have a blessed and full life awaiting us with Him. Where we are never empty but constantly filled by His love and His presence. Praise be to God for his gift of emptiness.



May the Lord keep you and bless you. May the Lord shine his face upon you, and give you peace now and during this most holy of seasons.

Grand Commandery Convocation 2024

The 2024 Grand Commandery Convocation will be held on Saturday, May 4, 2024, at the Bluemont Hotel in Manhattan, Kansas. This is the same location from our 2023 Grand York Rite Sessions. The Grand Commandery will hold a public opening at 8:00 AM and the formal closed meeting of the 156th Annual Conclave will start at 9:00 AM. The installation of the 2024-2025 officers will occur immediately following the Grand Commandery meeting.

All members of the Commandery are invited to attend. Please be sure to visit the Grand York Rite website at www.kansasyorkrite.org for more information and to register.