

New York Supplement

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Yves Etienne
Grand Commander

Greetings Sir Knights,

Let us emphasize the third word in this year's theme: Celebration. At Easter, Passover and Resurrection we celebrate Jesus Christ, but what do these three things have in common?

In my opinion, Passover, Easter and Resurrection is a Christian celebration called *Pascha* in Latin and Greek, a word derived from Aramaic *Paskha*—cognate to Hebrew *Pesach*. Passover, in English denotes the festival commemorating the Jewish Exodus from slavery in Egypt. Easter developed from an Old English word in the form *Eostre*—goddess. Reference to this goddess comes from the writings of the Venerable Bebe, a British monk from the late seventh and early eighth century. Resurrection is the concept of coming back to life after death. In a number of ancient religions, a dying-and-rising god is a deity, which dies and resurrects.

"Easter is linked to Passover and the Exodus from Egypt recorded in the Old Testament through the Last Supper, sufferings and crucifixion of Jesus Christ that preceded the resurrection. According to the New Testament, Jesus Christ gave the Passover meal a new meaning—as in the upper room during the Last Supper he prepared himself and his disciples for his death. He identified the matzah and cup of wine as his body soon to be sacrificed and his blood soon to be shed.

The New Testament also states that the resurrection of Jesus Christ, is one of the chief tenets of the Christian faith. Any person who chooses to follow Jesus Christ receives "a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead". According to the Gospel accounts Jesus Christ was crucified and resurrected at the time of the Jewish Passover.

Today, the Christian meaning of Easter is honoring and recognizing Jesus Christ's resurrection from the dead and His glorious promises of eternal life for all who believe in Him.

In Templary, our custom is to attend the Grand Encampment Easter Observance. This year, we will continue with that tradition in Alexandria, VA, from April 10-12 where many Grand Commanderies in the Eastern Region will gather to celebrate this event.

Go to www.knightstemplar.org and click on the 90th Annual East Coast Observance for room reservations and information. Hope to see you there.

The Officers of the Grand Commandery, Lady Joan and I wish all of you a joyful and blessed Easter.

Courteously and Fraternally,
SK Yves Etienne, R.E.G.C.

Grand Prelate's Corner

Easter is a time for celebrating Jesus' resurrection and life everlasting—a time for family and also a time for traditions. There are some great quotes about Easter that we should enjoy revisiting once in a while. If Easter says anything to us today, it says this: You can put truth in a grave, but it won't stay there. You can nail it to a cross, wrap it in winding sheets and shut it up in a tomb, but it will rise! It is the hour to rend thy chains, the blossom time of souls.

The resurrection gives my life meaning and direction and the opportunity to start over no matter what my circumstances. The joyful news that He is risen does not change the contemporary world. Still before us lie work, discipline and sacrifice—the fact of Easter gives us the spiritual power to do the work, accept the discipline and make the sacrifice.

The theologian and author William Barclay said, "Love always involves responsibility and love always involves sacrifice. And we do not really love Christ unless we are prepared to face His task and to take up His Cross." God proved His love on the Cross. When Christ hung, bled and died it was God saying to the world, "I love you." Here is the amazing thing about Easter—that Christ in the dying moments on the cross gives us the greatest illustration of forgiveness. The empty tomb signals that he has cleansed us from all wrong and we can live a new life.

Easter is meant to be a symbol of hope, renewal and new life. Let the resurrection joy lift us from loneliness, weakness and despair to strength, beauty and happiness. The story of Easter is the story of God's wonderful window of divine surprise. Immanuel, God with us in our nature, in our sorrow, in our lifework, in our punishment, in our grave and now with us—or rather we with Him, in resurrection, ascension, triumph and the second Advent splendor. Amen.

From the Editor

Again, we celebrate another Easter season and on behalf of Lady Debi and me, we wish all of you a wonderful Easter holiday.