

**District of Columbia Supplement
Sir Knight Kevin S. Matthews
Right Eminent Grand Commander**

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<http://knightstemplar.org/gckt/dc>

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Greetings, Sir Knights

It is a pleasure to write to you this month. I am penning this letter on Halloween day, so as you are reading, I trust this message finds you and your families in continued health and safety as we struggle with emerging from the COVID pandemic that has created the conditions for the social distancing environment that we have had to endure.

In belated fashion, I want to publicly show sincere appreciation to our members who have served in the military that we celebrated on Veteran's Day. I also trust everyone had a joyous Thanksgiving holiday with family and friends. The next period of celebration we now move into is the season of Advent to celebrate the birth of Christ. Our annual Christmas Libation approaches, which will be virtual this year due to our restrictions. We look forward to a great event.

I discussed in this supplement six months ago the need and the difficulty for social distancing. We as a Chivalric Order are not socially distant. This is a compound double meaning that I do not like very much. We are physically distant during this time for the protection of our members and prevention of spreading the virus. But as we distance ourselves physically, we have been and must continue to increase our communication with each other and the community.

Let us recall that we are the Christian Masonic Knights and the Masonic First Responders. Anxiety reigned when our COVID quarantine began. We have partially emerged from the quarantine, but there could be more restrictions during the cold winter months as cases increase. We fought panic in the spring, and I highly implore us not to panic now, and help others to avoid panic. We may not believe so now, but this situation is temporary. Everyday life may permanently change, such as increased security at airports since 9/11. We will be more aware of simple things like washing our hands and isolating the sick. We do not need to overreact. We are Christian

Knights in a Democratic Republic. Our freedoms enshrined in the Bill of Rights to the US Constitution are to be protected. We must fight being overprotective. We have, in the history of the United States, never been forced to quarantine healthy people. We must defeat this virus. In order to do so, we must not hide from this virus. We need fight for a cure, fight for our vulnerable people, and fight to keep our isolated people positive. Physical isolation creates a great deal more problems than it helps. Depression and hopelessness for people who have not had physical interaction or are out of work are problems too.

Therefore, as the Masonic First Responders, we need to redouble our efforts to increase our communication between ourselves and our members. Let us use the tools that we have available, the phone and internet, to reconnect with those Brethren whom we have not heard from in a while and see if they are in need. Beyond family and Brother Masons, let us also reach out to co-workers, community, extended family and friends. Let us discuss, but not exacerbate anxiety, defeat panic and provide reassurance, and portray a beacon of positive communication during this lack of social interaction.

Let us continue be the leaders in our families, communities, jobs, and Masonic organizations to help our fellow citizens re-establish our business and social lives. With safety concerns in mind, we must venture forth with strength to lead our communities in a return of the success of ourselves and our nation.

In conclusion, Sir Knights and Brethren, I want to reiterate that WE ARE the Masonic First Responders. Let us mobilize our efforts, electronic tools, and energy to reassure people within our social realms that we can defeat this virus, get back to a new near normal, and that we will emerge even stronger. We can do this. We can make a difference! Have a safe and happy holiday season.

Yours in the Service of Christ,

S. H. Robb Mitchell K&EJ

**Deputy Grand Commander 2019 - 2020
Grand Commandery of Knights Templar
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Send any queries to gcktdc@gmail.com