

OHIO SUPPLEMENT



SK R. Thomas Starr, KCT
Right Eminent Grand Commander
December 2020



Holiday Greetings Sir Knights!

I think back now to Christmas when I was a child and realize the innocence and simplicity of that time, particularly at a time when things seem complicated, maybe even overwhelming.

After Christmas Eve services at the Methodist Church next door, which usually included participating in a program by our Sunday School class, it was off to home. The anticipation of Christmas morning made sleep difficult.

My brother and I would wake up way too early and wonder when it would no longer be too early to awaken mom and dad. Patience is not plentiful in our family! We raced eagerly to the living room to check under the tree and read the gift tags, desperately looking for the ones with our name written on them. Soon we would be tearing through the wrapping paper and arguing who received the best presents.

At some point, the true spirit of Christmas becomes clear for us and overtakes the primal me-first instinct. It becomes more about "presence" than "presents".

For us, especially in times like these, it is an opportunity to hit the reset button. The holiday bustle that we often complain about, racing from place to place, ultimately running out of time to get everything done, looks a little different in a pandemic world. It is terribly sad that grandparents are not able to easily mix with their grandchildren during the holidays. Ditto for in-person visits to see shut-ins or those in the hospital or a nursing home. Some in our family have found themselves checking in more by phone or through one of the video conferencing services. It is not the same as sitting down together over Christmas dinner or dropping by for a relaxing visit, but we do the best we can.

My Commandery, Athens No. 15, had made plans to hold its Annual Inspection early this year so we could welcome Sir Knights and Ladies from across the state on a day when no other Templar activities were scheduled. Unfortunately, we will not be able to have our inspection on December 13 and, as of this writing, we are uncertain if there will be other changes to our 2021 inspection schedule. The latest updates will appear on ohioknightstemplar.com and through our Division Commanders and Deputy Division Commanders to our constituent Commanderies.

Our 178th Annual Conclave in October was a tremendous success. Held virtually for the first time, more than 200 Sir Knights participated. Thanks to a contribution from Forest City No. 40, Ohio is now 200% Life Sponsorship participants in the Knights Templar Eye Foundation! I congratulate SK Robert C. Hager, REPGC, on conducting a first-class Conclave, and all the Sir Knights who continue to serve this jurisdiction with distinction.

I want to send belated birthday greetings to Sir Knight Dick Rose, Past Commander of Cache Commandery, now affiliated with Columbian No. 52, who turned 100 on September 24th. SK Rose received his 65-year award from the Grand Commandery of Ohio last November. One of the joys of being Grand Commander is presenting our veteran members of 65 years or more a commemorative plaque. SK Rose leads Bible Study classes at The Villa at the Lake in Conneaut. He is a United States Navy veteran, and we thank him for his service to his country and to Templary. My thanks to Lady Alice Ritter and SK Bill Robinson for providing me information regarding SK Rose's special birthday. I hope it was a great one!

As we celebrate the birth of our Blessed Immanuel and in the spirit of the lessons he taught us, let us be mindful of those among us, especially our brothers and sisters in our fraternity, who are in distress during this Christmas season. Please reach out to those you know and those near you, let them know they are loved and, if you can, make their season a little brighter. You can make a difference. May you and yours have a Blessed Christmas and a Healthy and Safe New Year.

Courteously and fraternally,

R. Thomas Starr

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