



IOWA SUPPLEMENT

W Charles Smithson
Grand Commander

Greg Kenkel
Supplement Editor

kt.iayorkrite.org

Greetings Sir Knights:

Obviously I hope that all of you had a wonderful holiday season. First, I want to thank all of you for your support during my recent situation. I appreciate it more than you know, and certainly more than I will ever admit.

New Year and new opportunities. We can debate separately whether or not this is the start of a new decade (I am one who believes the new decade does not commence until 2021, but I do acknowledge the 2010s are over). With that theme of new opportunities in mind, I turn to a recent conversation that happened during the Des Moines York Rite Festival in November.

The Festival was successful on a number of fronts. Several candidates, good ritual, good lunch, not much arguing, and certainly no blood on the floor. Anyway, as frequently happens at these types of events the following conversation takes place: “Glad we have a lot of candidates” with a response “Now we just need to get them active and interested.” Typical stuff that happens all the time. Probably everyone who is taking the time to read this article has participated or heard that discussion *ad nauseum, ad infinitum*.

Then another Sir Knight said something that has both intrigued and bothered me ever since. He responded with: “Are we keeping our promises to these guys?.” I started to explore this with him in more detail, but we did not have time. What he did make clear to me was that he was referring to whether or not our York Rite bodies were doing what they say they are going to do for the candidates.

I found this to be a very provocative statement. Certainly one that has made me think a lot over the last month and one that will probably haunt me for months to come. Do we keep our promises?

Are we creating environments where candidates want to get active? Are our organizations a place of interest?

Now I understand that there have been numerous discussions, articles, educational seminars, and every other type of communication known to man made concerning these very questions. However, what struck me was the phrase “Are we keeping our promises to these guys?” For some reason it just gave me a new perspective on this issue. My guess is, unfortunately, far too often we are not keeping our promises.

So with the theme of a fresh start because of it being 2020 - I challenge all of us to work on making sure our York Rite organizations “keep their promises” to not only our new members, but to all of our members.

Whether it be big or small, let’s all try and do something to make sure we are “keeping our promises.” Whatever that means to each of you. If we all do even just one thing, the combined effort will be noticeable. Let’s hold our organizations accountable. Hold officers accountable. Hold ourselves accountable. Strive to be better than we are today. Both ourselves and our organizations.

At the end of 2020 it will be interesting for all of us to compare notes and see where we are. How we did. Hopefully all of us can at least say: “I helped make sure we kept our promises.”

God bless each and every one of you the start of this New Year (and arguably decade depending on point of view).