

## OKLAHOMA SUPPLEMENT

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SK Mark McFadden Grand Warden

Greetings Sir Knights, We are entering into a very special and busy month. First we have the beginning of our annual Winter Festivals which will be taking place. The Central Oklahoma Chapter and Council Festival will be held on February 1st. On Saturday February 8th the Tulsa Chapter and Council Festival will take place followed by the Tulsa Commandery Festival on Saturday March 14th. If you have a candidate that cannot attend one of these festivals then please make them aware of the Grand Masters Field day to be held on Saturday June 13th.

I hope that you will make plans to attend these events and invite Master Masons from your area who have not yet experienced all the York Rite has to offer to petition and attend these events. I would also encourage you to get out and visit your area Lodges. Contact them ahead of time and ask for permission to put on a short program detailing all of the wonderful things that York Rite Masonry has to offer including our fantastic charitable programs.

February is also a time for romanticism, a day whose origins are not quite so romantic. Flowers, candy, red hearts and romance, that's what Valentine's Day is all about, right? Well, maybe not.

The origin of this holiday for the expression of love really isn't romantic at all. There are many versions of its origin. One suggests that St. Valentine was a Roman Priest at during a period when there was an emperor by the name of Claudias II who persecuted the church at that particular time.

The emperor had an edict that prohibited the marriage of young people. This was based on the hypothesis that unmarried soldiers fought better than married soldiers because married soldiers might be afraid of

what might happen to them or their wives or families if they died. We must bear in mind that it was a very permissive society in which Valentine lived, Polygamy would have been much more popular than just one woman and one man living together. And yet some of them seemed to be attracted to Christian faith. But obviously the church considered marriage to be very sacred between one man and one woman for life and that it was to be encouraged. And so it immediately presented the problem to the Christian church of what to do about this.

The idea of encouraging these young people to marry within the Christian church was what Valentine was all about. He secretly married them because of the emperors edict.

Valentine was eventually caught, imprisoned and tortured for performing marriage ceremonies against the command of Emperor Claudius II. There are many legends surrounding Judge Valentine's actions while in prison. One such legend is of a man, Asterius, who was to him in line with the Roman law at the time. Asterius daughter, who was blind, was supposed to have prayed with Valentine and the young girl was healed with such astonishing effect that Asterius himself became a Christian.

In the year 269 AD, Valentine was sentenced to a three part execution of a beating, stoning, and finally decapitation, all because of his stand for Christian marriage. The story goes that the last words he wrote were in a note to Asterius' daughter. He inspired today's romantic missives by signing it, "from your Valentine. Probably the most plausible story surrounding St. Valentine is one not focused on passionate love but his love of God. He was martyred for refusing to renounce his religion.

I wish each of you all the best and hope to see you as I travel the state this year.

Yours in the Faith,  
SK Mark McFadden

The Senior Warden's Retreat for the Grand Commandery will be February 28, 29 & March 1, 2020. It will be held at the Quartz Mountain Conference Center. Arrival will be on Friday, Saturday will be Conference and Sunday will be church service and check out. There is a great program for the ladies on Saturday. If you wish to participate rooms are available for \$99.65 per night before February 1<sup>st</sup>. Contact me: (580) 471-0636 or jek41@sbcglobal.net  
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Grand Senior Warden