



The Florida Knight

S.K. Brett A. Gordon

Right Eminent Grand Commander 2020
1201 NW 193rd Ave - Pembroke Pines, Fl. 33028
Email: gordonphd@gmail.com
Phone: (954) 802-8147



State Supplement Editor

Gary R. Roane - 3632 6th Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL 33713 - grrokane123@gmail.com

Greetings Sir Knights,

We are now in the second month of our 125th Anniversary for the Grand Commandery of Florida and I thought this was an excellent opportunity to present you with some of the great programs that will be happening this year.

Most of you might have already heard about the virtual meeting that was held earlier in the month for the local Commandery dais officers. While there was certainly room for improvement in attendance and information sharing, these meetings have tremendous potential for success. If we communicate across the State and among all the commanderies, there is nothing we cannot accomplish. These meetings will take place every other month as a mandatory meeting for the dais officers (or their proxy) to provide information to the Grand Commandery and to discuss issues of concern or areas where help is needed. I encourage every Sir Knight to try and attend these virtual meetings to listen, learn, and basically understand what is happening around the State. These meetings will effectively replace the "old" district meeting format, that traditionally have been poorly attended and limited in scope. I hope that these meetings will provide a more inclusive sense of communication and allow those attending to become informed about things far beyond their Chivalric Districts. This is also the vehicle for your voice to be heard throughout the year.

As every previous Grand Commander can attest, finding ways to increase membership is always a priority. However, recruitment is only one side of the coin. Retention of current members is also something we need to focus on. If we don't our commanderies run the risk of more people leaving than we are capable of knighting. This year the Committee Chair for Knight Templar Education (Scott Schwartzberg) has something planned that will help us tackle both sides of that membership coin. Sir Knight Scott is organizing a series of speaker programs, with prominent Masonic authors who will speak on various Blue Lodge topics. These speaker programs can be used by local commanderies as a recruitment tool to attract non-York Rite members into joining, and as a retention tool for current York Rite members that might otherwise not be as active as we would like them to be. The dates and times of these speaking events will be announced soon – so please watch out for the notification that will be posted on the Grand York Rite website and communicated to your local Recorder. When these dates and times are announced, I am asking for your help to promote these programs to all the Blue Lodges in your area. This will be our chance to demonstrate to the Blue Lodges that the Commandery is a great source for their continued Masonic Education. While these programs were originally planned to be held in various locations throughout the State, social distancing may still be a concern for some of our members. Therefore, we are working to convert these programs into virtual conferences. This format still provides local comman-

deries with a recruiting and retention opportunity while also allowing for a larger overall attendance at each event. We may, with the permission of the presenter, be allowed to record these events so they can be archived on the Grand York Rite website for future viewing.

Another priority for every Grand Commander has been the Holy Land Pilgrimage. This year each District Deputy Grand Commander provided at least one name to the Very Eminent Deputy Grand Commander Adam Bryan (Chairman of the HLP Committee). Having that list of names provides a solid basis whereby Florida can send a group of ministers to the Holy Land. Please remember that we still have a few months left before applications need to be submitted, but you need to act quickly to make sure you meet the deadline.

This year I am also announcing the creation of the Holy Land Pilgrimage Award. Initially this award was drafted as proposed legislation to include it among the official awards in Florida. However, as we did not vote on any legislation during our virtual convention, this award has been implemented by my authority as Grand Commander as a fund-raising award for this year. It is my intent that the Knights vote on making the award an official part of our Constitution at the next Grand York Rite Session in 2021. Any Knight can earn the Holy Land Pilgrimage Award by making a one-time donation of \$500 to Florida Grand Commandery Holy Land Pilgrimage Fund. For more information and to see what the award looks like, visit the Grand York Rite website or contact your local Recorder.

Our Grand Prelate, Sir Knight Jack Holloway has also begun posting religious affirmation messages on the Grand York Rite Website. Please be sure to take a look at these wonderfully inspiring messages, especially during times like we are currently experiencing. Sir Knight Jack and the Religious Activities Committee (Chaired by REPGC David Aponte) are presently working on the development of a Breviary for the knights in Florida. A Breviary is a book containing prayers and inspirational messages for contemplation. Many of the various Orders of Knighthood both in ancient times and in the present use these books. I trust that it will be something that you can personally use, as well as, a tool to use in your local commanderies to stimulate discussion for the Templar Education part of your meetings.

As we are slowly returning to 100% normal, I trust you can agree with me that as Masons and Knights of the Temple, we have demonstrated that Masonic Light still shines brightly even in the darkest of times. I am sure most of you have been attending the virtual meetings that have been taking place during the self-isolation period. I feel that I have learned more about Masonry in these past few months from all of these wonderful lectures and presentations, then I have in my 32-years as a Mason. It is truly a wonderful experience to see how Brothers, Companions, and Sir Knights from around the globe are interacting with one another to spread Masonic knowledge.

I know that we are in very troubling times, but our predecessor Knights of the Temple faced far more strenuous obstacles in the Crusades to take the Holy Land. We, too, shall rise to the occasion and meet the foes of the 21st century with equal vigor and equal success.

Donec Totem Impleat Orbem,

Brett A. Gordon, KYCH
Right Eminent Grand Commander