



IOWA SUPPLEMENT

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Sir Knights:

First I want to provide my humble and heartfelt thanks to the Sir Knights of the Grand Commandery of Iowa for electing me to serve as your Grand Commander for this Templar year. I am truly humbled at this high honor of leading OUR (yours and mine) Grand Commandery this year. I also want to thank all the Grand Officers, committee members and all Sir Knights who have stepped forward to serve this year. I also want to express thanks for all the support and counsel I have received in my journey to this position. It means so much to me to be part of this great organization.

Although the circumstances of our Grand Conclave and the installation of officers was very unique, to say the least, I am confident that we will have a great year. I know many of us are eager to resume our in-person gatherings, conferring our orders and just enjoying each other's company. I know I am.

Sir Knights, this year I would like a focus to be on strengthening our foundation as an Order. Right Eminent Grand Commander Smithson touched on this during his articles this past year, and in particular in his June note in this publication. I believe we need to work on the fundamental challenges we face as an Order, and need to take a hard look at why we're here and why we do what we do.

What brought you into Commandery? What was it that made you stay a member? What is it that keeps you wanting to come back? Or, for some, what is it that keeps you away?

One of the most powerful "calling cards" that we have is our ritual, when conferred in "a most solemn and impressive manner." Yet too few are proficient in the most important parts of it. Is it because we don't have a mentor to help us learn it? Is it because

we don't see it conferred enough? Is it because someone else has been doing it for so long we don't want to interfere?

All of these are easily overcome and I would like to make ritual conferral a priority this year. We don't necessarily need to do it for a candidate, but in my experience I have seen that if you schedule a conferral of the degrees or rituals, you will have candidates ready to receive them.

Another focus will be on engagement outside of our Commanderies. A number of us are often called upon for arches of steel, cornerstone ceremonies and the like. But I think we can do more. The work that Gene Hatfield did in forming honor guards for the Honor Flights is a great example.

Another area of focus is on our youth. There are pockets of active Masonic youth organizations in the state that I believe we can more actively support. But not just our Masonic youth. What can we do to promote ourselves and our values to others that don't know who we are or what we stand for? I've heard of examples of flag presentations at high school football and basketball games, for example. How powerful could it be to have the Flag Lecture recited in a public setting before the National Anthem?

In a few weeks I will be outlining my program for this year, which will spell my thoughts out in more detail. But the general gist of it is: I want us all to become more active, both within our local Commanderies and in our communities. We have a great story to tell, and a great message for the world!

Ex nihilo nihil fit – from nothing comes nothing. In this spirit, I look forward to working with all of you in spreading our great story to the world.

In His Service,

Chris Beard, Grand Commander