



Indiana Supplement

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Keep Your Priorities Straight

By SK Michael Robbins KCT
Grand Commander

Sir Knights,

I hope everyone realizes how difficult these supplements have become to write in the past few months. It seems like the world is changing daily, yet I am writing these almost two months ahead of publication.

What I write today may be totally irrelevant to what is happening in the world by the time it reaches print.

The bottom line is still this. Family, job, Masonry. Nothing is more important than your health and the health and welfare of your family. Period. But may I suggest that you are the best one to decide what is best for you. I would never find fault with a man for doing what he finds best for himself and his family.

It's possible that some Masonic organizations may be holding business meetings again soon. Like you, I certainly hope so, but I understand those who may have health issues themselves or at home don't want to risk it, either for themselves or a family member. That is totally understandable.

With that in mind, what can we do to keep interest in Templary for those who are still not comfortable in any Masonic group setting? I hope that in the past couple of months some of you have learned the word Zoom or some other teleconference or webcast application. We like to preach brotherly love, now we need to practice it.

Doing nothing and waiting for someone else to do it has been the death of many organizations. We have the advantage of telephones, emails, Zoom, and other telecommunications. Don't assume that because you are comfortable "getting out" that everyone else is. We need to take care of all of our members. That's what leaders do. As Templars we shouldn't leave anyone behind.

Bind up the wounds of the afflicted

By SK Edward L. Sebring KCT, KTCH, GPE
Editor

As Christian knights we are obligated to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and bind up the wounds of the afflicted.

But just who is "afflicted?" I have learned from personal experience that helping fraters who are obviously afflicted can positively impact the lives of others who are also afflicted, but just don't show it.

As one who did show his affliction, I give you an incredible man, the late SK Chris Kimmel of Vincennes Commandery No. 20.

About age 9, Chris and his best friend found Dad's handgun. The result was a bullet in Chris' head. Chris was a quadriplegic, able to move his arms just enough to steer an electric wheelchair. Yet, he became an Eagle Scout, earned degrees from Vincennes and Ball State universities, and nearly completed a master's degree. A brilliant man, he held two state vice presidencies in Jaycees. In Masonry he became Grand Governor General of the Yeomen of York, and was presented the Order of Service to Masonry, as well as the Order of the Purple Cross, the Knight of the York Cross of Honour, and the Grand Master's Award with Highest Honor, and chaired the Grand Lodge Education Committee.

I am so proud of my fraters of Vincennes. When Chris became active in Masonry, they did not hesitate to make the Temple fit Chris. Obtaining grand permissions, they moved the regalia from our second-story lodge room to our ground-floor dining room and met and conferred degrees and orders there for a couple of years while they raised money to install an elevator.

The point of my column is: although Chris was the obvious beneficiary of that elevator, he was far from the only one, to which I can personally testify.

My knee and hip joints were literally bone on bone. It was becoming more, and more difficult for me to climb those stairs, or even walk. Soon, I would have stopped coming. I wouldn't have said a word, I just would have stopped coming.

And I'm sure there were others benefitted from that small elevator. They might not have been walking with a cane, then two canes, then a rolling walker, like me, but because of joint problems, or a heart or respiratory condition, or something else, they might have ridden off into the sunset without that elevator.

There are all kinds of afflictions, and all kinds of reasons that can cause otherwise active fraters to stop coming. We need to be alert to their needs. We need to reach out to them, to show them they are our beloved Brothers, Companions and Fraters. There is physical accessibility to our buildings, but, should Grand authorities allow, we might find good reason to reach out by digital means, even after this pandemic ends, to those needing more than elevators.