



The Florida Knight

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Hello Fellow Fraters.

Welcome to the month of March. Depending on where you live in Florida you can say it came in as a Lion or Lamb. As most of you know I write my articles way in advance of the monthly due date, so it may be like a winter day in Maine the day you receive this copy. Do what others do and blame Mother Nature not me for no lamb like weather where you are.

The Month of March brings us St Patrick's Day on the 17th. Besides the 17th being St Paddy's Day, it is also the birthday for my youngest Brother. So, if for no other reason I remember the 17th of March. Don't forget to wear something green to honor St Patrick. Connie and I wish you a very happy St Patrick's Day and a great March. Now why do we celebrate St Patrick?

St Patrick is also known as "Apostle of Ireland" and believe it or not he started out in the pagan religion. Not much is known about his early life and many of his life's details are lost in folklore. He was born around 460 AD and it didn't take long just a little over a 100 years for him to be known as the Patron Saint of Ireland. It is funny how many legends become a tale that people believe to be fact. It is said that he used a shamrock to illustrate the Holy Trinity, and we associate the shamrock with St Patrick's Day and it is also the color of St Patrick's Day. Is this true? I don't think anyone alive knows that answer. Here's another for you. Many say and believe that St Patrick banished snakes from Ireland. As the story goes, while he was fasting snakes attacked him, so he chased all of them into the ocean. Fact is Ireland never has had snakes. Perhaps they were talking about a type of worm. One more. It is said St Patrick placed a walking stick into the ground while he was evangelizing and it turned into a tree. I guess we will never know if any of these legends are true and who really cares. What we do know is we do celebrate him on the 17th March every year.

St Patrick's Day started being celebrated in America before we were a nation. It was organized by the Charitable Irish Society of Boston in 1737, and this is the year it was first celebrated. It was initially celebrated as a holiday to honor and celebrate Irish culture, which many colonists were forced to leave in Europe. St Patrick's Day is celebrated in many different ways throughout the United States and the world as far as that goes. One thing is certain; it has evolved from the modest religious dinner celebrated a long time ago into the wild and disorderly holiday we know today in many cases. No matter how you celebrate St Patrick's Day have a good one, always remembering we are Christian Knights.

Just a bit more history for you before I speak about my main topic for this month. We all know the name Jacques de Molay as a famous Knights Templar, and I am sure you can name many others. If we look through our history, we can find many others who could be famous people, but not known by many in our order as a Knights Templar. One is William F. Cody, better known as Buffalo Bill. I'll bet many reading this will be surprised to find out one of our astronauts was a Knights Templar. That's right Leroy Gordon Cooper became a Sir Knight on January 26, 1963 at Cocoa, Florida. I know there are many more, but will leave that to you to research.

The rest of this month's supplement is being dedicated to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation. One of my goals for this year is accomplishing 100% life sponsorship in our Commandries. We aren't there yet, but I know several Commandries have done their part towards this goal. Keep at it please. There is still time, and you get to subtract 1 dollar per Knight away from your per capita. One of my other goals is to have 10 new enrollees in the Grand Commander's Club. This requires \$100.00 donation and after you achieve \$1000.00 you are enrolled into the Grand Master's Club. We have a very good chance of seeing this goal being achieved. There are several ways to donate and many special awards for your contributions.

1. You can become a Life Sponsor by donation through your Commandery the sum of \$30.00 mentioned above.
2. Associate Patron is available to any person or organization that donates \$50.00.
3. Patron is available to any person or organization that donates \$100.00. Don't forget to enroll in the Grand Commander's club. Payments for life, Associate Patron or Patron will eliminate the one dollar assessment to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation.
4. The Grand Commander's Club which has an initial down of \$100.00. At your enrollment you will receive a lapel pin and wallet card signifying your membership. Members of the Grand Commander's Club pledge to donate \$100.00 a year until they achieve \$1000.00. You can do this over the next 9 years if need be.
5. The Grand Master's Club. Once you achieve the \$1000.00 dollars or you can start with that amount. Enrollment into the Grand Master's Club entitles you to a lapel pin, an engraved wall plaque and the Crusaders Cross issued for the first 5 Grand Master Clubs. Should you achieve 25 Grand Master Clubs you will be awarded the Sword of Merit. *The Grand Commander's and Grand Master's Club are available to all Knights Templar, but not to organizations.*

There are many other ways to donate; memorials, Honorary gifts, wills and bequests. The Golden Chalice for a single donation of 10K or more and the Grand Master's Sword of Merit for a single donation of 25K or more. Please consider becoming a life sponsor, Associate Patron or Patron and don't forget the Grand Commander's club. Sir Knights, have a very Happy St Patrick's Day and may God bless you and your families.

Yours in Faith and Christ our Savior,

Ronald L. Parks, KYCH
Right Eminent Grand Commander