

# New York Supplement

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Yves Etienne  
Grand Commander

Greetings Sir Knights,

As we previously discussed the 3R's (Recruiting, Retention and Restore), I mentioned that we really need to act on the 3R's in order to continue with a balanced membership in general—especially in our Commanderies. We are aware that we also depend on the other concordant bodies to feed us. I am positively sure that the other bodies are doing their best with the membership issue.

In my opinion, there is no other way that an organization, especially this of ours, can survive if it does not observe these three membership principles. Education also plays a very important role in an organizational survival list. We are well aware that we need to educate our members (new and existing) not only about ritual, but in different aspects of the organization—especially the active members and officers.

Therefore, the Grand Commandery established a very successful educational program in general for our members and the officers of the local, zone and Grand Line many years ago. An annual symposium was organized by the late Sir Knight Frederick A. Beitter, Past Grand Commander, to educate all the Sir Knights in New York. He invited all the Sir Knights to come, participate, learn and discuss any type of issues that concern a Commandery. This event is now in its fifth year—and we now call it The Sir Knight Frederick A. Beitter Symposium.

I would like to talk about “symposium” for a minute. According to the Dictionary, there are two types of symposia: One symposia can be a Panel Symposia another symposia can be a Presenter Symposia. The question is: What is a symposium? Symposium is described simply as “a small conference.” It is defined as a teaching technique that serves as an excellent method for informing the audience, crystallizing their opinion and preparing them for arriving at decisions regarding a particular issue or a topic. It can also be described as a gathering of experts presenting their findings on a specific topic within a single day. These experts in their field provide information about their work, their opinion and perspective on a particular topic—or guidelines for future discussion. The most important thing about a symposium is that everyone has a good time and learns something new.

This year, the fifth annual Sir Knight Frederick A. Beitter Symposium will focus on the duties, obligations and responsibilities of the Zone Commanders, Deputy Zone Commanders, Zone Advisors, Commanders, Records and any other Sir Knight who wish to participate. Each participant will receive a Certificate of Attendance. All participants will leave the Symposium with a smile and know that they learned something new.

Courteously and fraternally,  
S. K. Yves Etienne, R.E.G.C.

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### Grand Prelate's Corner

What does God's word teach about luck? The word "luck" does not appear in the Bible. Luck has two somewhat contradictory meanings. The original term is related to destiny as pre-determined by a deity or force—what we might call providence. Today luck more often refers to an event that is out of the control of those involved and has significant repercussions, whether good or bad. This type of luck is related to the chaos theory which points out that most situations are affected by so many elements the outcome appears random and certainly unpredictable.

The Bible rejects the second type of luck and is cautious with the first. God cannot be manipulated to endow good fortune through superstitious practices. And His omniscience precludes the existence of any truly random event. The Bible does use the word "chance" on occasion, but not as a completely unforeseen event. It generally indicates that the people involved had no way of knowing something would occur, but it doesn't follow that God didn't know.

The idea of luck brings up a difficult theological discussion: does God ordain everything that happens to us, or does He let nature and human choice play out to their inevitable end. The answer is a confusing "both." We do often bear the repercussions of choices, ours and others, without the apparent interference of God. In other cases, He acts in a way we call "miracles." How, when, and why He acts are usually hidden from us, but whether He ordained it or allowed it to happen, He did allow it. He is in control—he conducts all natural consequences and miracles in a way that will bring honor to Him and salvation to us.

What the Bible categorically condemns is the use of superstition to gain the favor of God or any deity to bring fortunate results. And God so hates being manipulated by worship practices that He'd rather we abandon those traditions He put into place and worship Him from the heart than obey Him for the sole purpose of gaining favor.