

December message Knights Templar Magazine

Reflection and Renewal

Merry Christmas to all Maryland Fraters. We hope you had a great Thanksgiving Holiday with a renewed ability to gather with Family and friends. This opportunity has been denied us for nearly two years. As we reflect upon the past two years of Life in the world at large, we have seen many changes. Isolation and Quarantine which had been foreign to us as Americans, and other nations around the world, has changed life as we know it. Here in America the added issue of Politicization and Polarization of the Pandemic has added an additional, albeit unsavory, twist to the cruel aspects of the virus. Separation and longing for the way things used to be, has become common place in our daily lives. Caution has become the watchword as we attempt to perform the most mundane of tasks.

In Freemasonry, and in particular, within the Knights Templar, we have suffered a mandatory closure that has altered our way of life and our work to train and assist our Sir Knights. Our families have been separated not only within our blood relatives, but our Masonic families as well. In essence we have gradually lost the HABIT of attending regular meetings and Conclaves. These usual pursuits have been replaced by other activities. I personally have had more time to play with Grandchildren, work on projects in my home and focus on my business. Preparations to begin my new role as Grand Commander also took up much time.

Despite the changes, Maryland Grand Commandery was able to celebrate our 150th anniversary with celebrations, culminating in September with a Banquet and the conferral of the Three Orders of Templary. Congratulations to the nearly 50 new Sir Knights that were knighted on the 18th of September.

So now we come to December, the Christmas Holidays and the Winter Solstice. How does the above, sad climate affect us now? Sorry to start out with a deluge of depressing reflections.

But guess what. That time appears to be coming to a close.

In recent weeks I have been attending Conclaves across the State, where Templary is again beginning to blossom. Knights Templars have begun gathering again, a few at time, stretching their limbs and drawing their swords to resume the labor and fun of practicing our Craft. In October the York Rite Grand Sessions concluded a new beginning with new officers in Royal Arch Grand Chapter and Grand Commandery. Last weekend the Grand Lodge of Maryland began a new year with the Annual Convocation in Cockeysville. New life, new vigor, new energy.

Just as the Birth of our savior Jesus Christ heralded the incoming change from Paganism to Christianity. Just as the Winter solstice signals the change of darkness to light. So too can we begin to be reinvigorated with new hope of freedom to move, freedom to gather again and freedom to act as Masons and Sir Knights. Together, in our devotions, and in our work to bring the message of Christian vision to reality, we begin anew to support our Asylums.

The Knights Templar will hit the ground running in December. We'll be marching in back to back parades to celebrate the Holiday season. Dec. 4th in New Market Md. and Dec 5th in Baltimore for the Mayor's Parade alongside Grand Master Marlin Mills and lots of other Masonic organizations in this annual event. Come and join us. You will find information in the Events section of the York Rite Web site under the Commandery Header.

Keep track of the website for updates at yorkritemaryland.org. Here you will also see information for upcoming Christmas Observances across the state. If your Commandery is holding a Knight Templar Observance, please let me know and I will list it and try to attend with Lady Kandi. See the listings for particulars and the need for RSVP for any dinners.

Thus far we are listing Dec. 2nd Jacques DeMolay #4 in Frederick Md. 6:00 PM dinner followed by Service @ 7:30 .

Dec. 11th is Palestine Commandery #7 In Annapolis Md. Service @ 10:00 AM and lunch to follow.

Dec. 19 Baltimore Commanderies joint Observance Maryland #1, Monumental Crusade #3, Beauseant #8 will celebrate in Cockeysville with a dinner at 4:00 PM in the social area in the basement of the Grand Lodge, followed by Christmas Observance at 5:30 PM in the Gothic room. Don't forget to make reservations if you intend to have a seat for dinners. All are welcome to the Services.

Dec. 19th also is the traditional York Rite Christmas Service being held at the Masonic homes Chapel. This service is open to all and features an opportunity for the gathering of all York Rite members. Service begins at 3:00 PM

Please let me know if you have events that can be put on the Calendar.

In the coming weeks and months, you will be seeing Grand Commandery Officers appearing in your Asylums as we begin an effort to assist your Commandery with refreshing your Templar experience. Our Grand Line is dedicated to help with Training, Wardrobe and Uniform items, as well as assistance with the conferral of the orders by shadowing your team members with floorwork and ritual guidance. If you need help to open a conclave or advice on membership as well as practice and communication, we are here to help.

You will be offered the opportunity to attend Knight Training events which will assist in educating new Knights Templars as well as experienced Knights that may wish a refresher. We will also be creating opportunity to have hands on access to you by teaming your Commandery with Officers in the Grand Line committed to 6 important aspects -Membership, Knights Templar Eye Foundation, Education Foundation (Scholarships and grants), Religious Observance, Training and Ritual, Uniform and Wardrobe. Please see order #3 listing these aspects of our renewal program. As you can see, we have much to talk about and no time to be lost.

We hope you will begin to plan now to begin anew our efforts. You can begin by contacting your local lodges and offering to support the incoming officers at their installation by performing a flag presentation in Uniform. A great way to start the new year in January.

Stay well my Fraters and enjoy the Holidays.

REGC John H. Austin

