

CALIFORNIA KNIGHTS TEMPLAR

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"A New Beginning Awaits. How will we respond?"

by SK David W. Studley

Bob Dylan famously asked:

**"Yes, and how many years must a mountain exist
 Before it is washed to the sea?
 And how many years can some people exist
 Before they're allowed to be free?
 Yes, and how many times can a man turn his head
 And pretend that he just doesn't see?"**

**The answer, my friend, is blowin' in the wind
 The answer is blowin' in the wind."**

I confess, I'm a child of the 60's, maybe early 70's if I'm being generous. I lived and served during Vietnam, saw first-hand the protests in Berkeley, recall the night President Johnson declined to seek reelection. My youthful impressions have been tempered by the years and my enthusiasm for confrontation dampened, possibly by wisdom but more likely by experience. So when I look back at the events of the past two weeks, the historic and fateful decisions of the Ft. Wayne Special Conclave, I wonder how to react. Perhaps you do too.

First and foremost, I see the triumph of democracy over oppression, the exercise of the overwhelming will of our

Members over the heavy-handed dictates of a tone-deaf leader. Yet somehow the experience leaves me saddened. I feel diminished by what we were compelled to do. True, the outcome was appropriate and the process justified. Still, the whole affair feels less a cause for celebration than one for introspection.

I realize that an injustice was corrected; we should be thankful for that result. Sir Knight David Kussman was restored to his position as Deputy Grand Master and elevated by the constitutional process when Sir Knight Michael Johnson was removed. Those actions are laudable. I similarly acknowledge that I benefitted from being appointed and installed as Grand Captain General, a position for which I am deeply honored to serve, albeit only for the duration of the Triennium. A placeholder, if you will, until our Members can voice their preference for candidates who have committed to run and serve our Grand Encampment.



What's now in store for our Grand Commandery and the Grand Encampment?

How are we to emerge closer, stronger, more devoted to each other and to our fraternity?



I suggest that we rededicate ourselves to the Christian principles that brought we Sir Knights to the Commandery in the first place: a respect for the individual, tolerance of diverse opinions, brotherly

love, charity, and faith in our Savior. If we are able to do this, we can bind up the wounds from the Indiana experience and emerge recommitted to our craft and our religion.

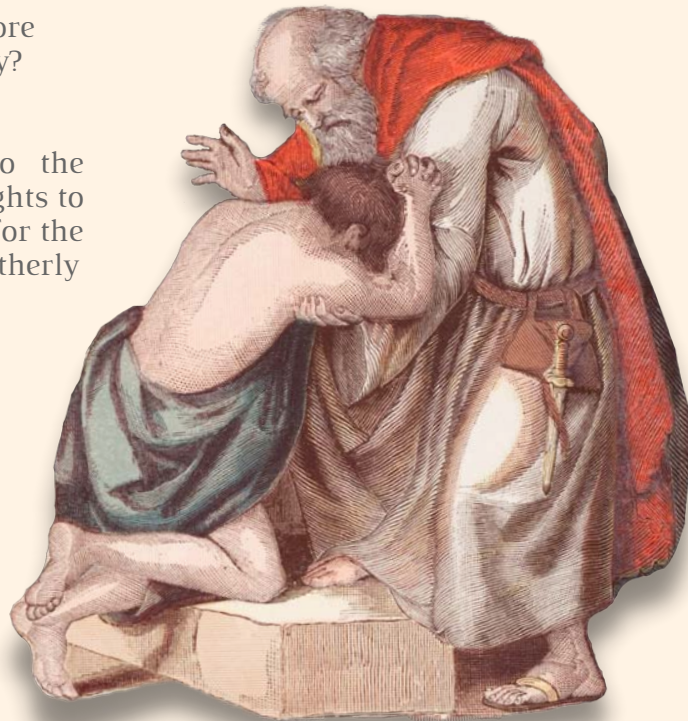
It will be hard work; the injuries of the past and the failures that allowed them to occur are not easily resolved. But as men of good will, I believe that all of us can move forward with the valor and magnanimity that characterized our predecessors and will truly entitle us to call ourselves Knights Templar.

May God Bless us all.



Courteously,

David W. Studley
Grand Commander



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