

# The Asylum

## From the Editor

Sir Knight Daniel A. Rivers, PC

It is December, a time of renewal, and of celebrating miracles. Nature takes a giant breath, and prepares for renewal! Spring brings an abundance of energy, and creation everywhere we look. The world is new once again, **and so full of potential!** It is clearly no accident that God, with a great assist from Mary, made his Son available during a time when renewal was desperately needed.

*“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”*

Each year we as human beings are given an opportunity, or the potential, to renew who we are as Christian Knights, and lights of humanity! The news highlights terrible things which have occurred each year, but we have the ability to renew and rededicate ourselves to set a right example, give to others from the heart and to provide charity wherever and whenever possible, within our set boundaries. Renewal occurs so often; we sometimes forget the miracle it brings! Who can forget the renewal of finding a soul mate to plan a future with, seeing the world through a child’s eyes, such wonder and joy, connecting with friends and family, and providing gifts and joy from the heart.

Joy and misery share one characteristic that I am aware of. They are both contagious! The celebration of our Lord and Savior brings great joy this time of year, which is, for the most part contagious. The difficulty is in sustaining this joy year-round. We do that through dedicating ourselves to things that are worthwhile, and bigger than we are, such as being a Christian Knight, a Knight Templar. Our organization does phenomenal work year-round through our charities, and by being a living light for others to emulate. That is what I take away from my time with other Sir Knights, the Grand Commandery Officers and the Ladies of the Beauceant. When I hear about the work being accomplished by the Knight Templar Eye Foundation, various Commanderies and individuals within our organization I am amazed and uplifted on many levels. Renewal of a joyous heart sustains me through life’s challenges! It can sustain you as well.

Renewal is the Lord’s gift to us! By it, each day should be a blessing, a new opportunity for joy and happiness, each gathering a celebration of life, love and friendship! Be joyous this time of year, but cultivate that sustained joy which should reside within us year-round.





## GRAND COMMANDERY OF KNIGHTS TEMPLAR OF COLORADO

Sir Knight Ron Birely, Right Eminent Grand Commander  
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### Christmas Message 2022

During this blessed season all Knights Templar, and in fact Christians all over the world, turn their eyes to, perhaps, the most famous story in the world. A young woman, Mary, gives birth to the Savior of the world. We read in the Gospel of Luke 2:9-11 “an angel of the Lord appeared to the shepherds in the field, and the glory of the Lord shone over them. They were terribly afraid, but the angel said to them, don’t be afraid! I am here with good news for you, which will bring great joy to all the people. This very day in David’s town your Savior was born – Christ the Lord.”

Today it may seem like we are the shepherds. Working, and living in a world filled with much to be fearful of. But, we are reminded in this story that we are not to be afraid. We are told that our Lord and Savior was born on that very night in the town of Bethlehem.

Templars, and Christians, are fully aware that the spirit of Christ is with them every day. The Christmas Season is one that reminds us of all the best that we have to offer the world. It is a season of compassion and caring for each other. A season of kindness, generosity, and love.

My prayer for you and yours, this blessed season, is that you feel the peace of Christ in your lives during this most blessed holiday season.

Merry Christmas,

*Ron Birely*

Ron Birely  
R.E. Grand Commander  
Grand Commandery of Colorado

Denver Assembly No. 1  
Social Order of the Beauceant

Denver Assembly No. 1 honored our Sir Knights with a luncheon on October 28. Thank you to the R.E.G.C. and all the Sir Knights who attended this special event. Following the luncheon, at our regular meeting, we held an initiation. Welcome (Mrs. Stephen) Sheila Davis!

At the November meeting we held elections for the 2023 Officers:

(Mrs. Mark) Lauren Ralston ~ Worthy President

Ms. Rose McDonald ~ First Vice President

(Mrs. Keith) Cathy Anderson ~ Preceptress

(Mrs. Joe) Sue Summers ~ Recorder

Ms. Kris MacPherson ~ Treasurer

Congratulations to those elected! We look forward to installation on January 13, 2023.

December will wrap up our 2022 Beauceant year, with annual reports and our Memorial Service. What an amazing year this has been!

Christmas magic is silent -

You don't hear it,

You don't feel it,

You know it;

You believe it.

Wishing you a joyous Holiday Season!

Elaine Birely  
Worthy President

## Directors Tips for Exemplifying the Orders

Being asked to be the director for an Order or degree can seem like a daunting task, but it really isn't if you approach it carefully and logically. The following tips are from some strategies I've developed from directing the Orders and degrees..

The most important thing is to start early and give yourself as much time as possible to develop the exemplification of the Order. The dates for the Orders should be set early in the Commandery year. How they are set and by whom is unimportant for this discussion, it just needs to be done early. The directors are then appointed and each director sets his own tentative practice dates, makes his own arrangements for where the practices are held and assembles his cast. I recommend having three practices but two at a minimum. Setting these dates early allows maximum time for cast members to reserve the practice dates and learn their roles. I recommend that the first two Orders, The Illustrious Order of the Red Cross and the Mediterranean Pass/Order of Malta be exemplified on regular meeting nights. If the Order of the Temple is done on a Saturday, there is more time to exemplify the Order. Stress due to time constraints is reduced due and there is time afterwards for celebration, fellowship and refreshments/food. Have a cake and make it a "Big Deal" for the candidates.

The first big order of business is to select the cast. Knowing the practice dates may help a potential actor in his decision to participate. Again, do this step right when you have been appointed a director. If you broadcast an email asking for volunteers to do roles, don't be surprised if you get a poor response. I don't even do it anymore. Start contacting potential cast members individually, calling them on the phone is best but email is good too. You can use the cast lists from previous exemplifications of your Order, ask Sir Knights that you know individually whether in your Commandery or another. You may have new members who are anxious to become involved and may jump at the chance. Ask other Commanderies if they have potential cast members and ask if they can point you to anyone else that can do the part, contact the secretary of the York Rite College for names and contacts of those who know the part. The York Rite College is there to help. Develop a network for obtaining cast members.

The director needs to study the Order early and be intimate with every detail of the Order such as the story line, how each actor contributes to that story line as well as the all the floor work and the placement of the props. Needless to say that the actors need to be costumed for the Order, so to ease the workload of the director, who will be very busy when the Order is exemplified, I have created three new positions on my cast lists: two grips and one costumer.

- It is the responsibility of the grips to not only know what props are required for the Order but to procure them if not on hand, know where they are stored, repair them if damaged, make them easily available at exemplification time, place them in their proper positions during the exemplification and remove them later as required.
- The costumer's responsibility is to have all the costumes on hand and in good condition (clean & not torn) and correct if not. Have all the costumes centrally placed so the cast can easily don and doff them during the Order.

Again the grips and costumers also need to start early in the year to cover their responsibility.

All cast members need to attend all practices. Some will say they know their part and the floor work but that's unimportant. All cast members need to practice the floor work as a unit and be familiar with the

movement and queues for that particular group of actors. It can be daunting for an actor to have to cover a missed queue by another actor. That missed queue can be in the form of being in the wrong spot on the floor or speaking at the wrong time or place. I've had to do that and it's not fun to cover missed queues while maintaining the ritual flow.

I find it helpful to manage the Order just like managing a project at work. I make up what I call a "Order Book" for any Order I direct. It contains tabs for different aspects of the Order such as:

- Cast list which includes:
  - Role
  - Actor
  - Actor's email address
  - Notes about that role such as hard/easy, long/short etc.
  - Asked/Confirmation status column. I enter a potential actor's information whom I plan to ask or have emailed an acting request to. Later, I either remove the actor's entry, or update his status from **Asked** to **Confirmed** when he has committed,
- A spread sheet of practice dates and who attended
- Notes
- Any other pertinent data

For email purposes, I create an email group consisting of all the cast members for the Order including their phone numbers. The three most important things to do in directing an Order is *communicate, communicate, communicate!* Having an email group all set up makes communication trivial and you're more likely to communicate helpful tidbits to your cast. Keep your cast informed.

Have an agenda for the practices. Know what you want to accomplish at each practice. I usually start with floor work on the first practice (they still need to speak their lines), demonstrate proficiency in the speaking part for the second practice and overall presentation for the third practice. Get actors to speak from their diaphragm to project their voice. Encourage them to feel the part, be the person they are portraying, vary the inflection of their voice, use body language and facial expressions. If necessary, show them how you want their character to appear. You need to be able to demonstrate everything that you want your cast to do; one more reason to be intimate with the Order. Listen to the suggestions of the actors, especially if they have done their role before. Don't be a "know it all" or a dictator, you are working with volunteers. Start the practices on time and allow plenty of time to go through the Order a couple of times at each practice, i.e. the practices can be a couple of hours long so plan accordingly. Congratulate the cast for a doing good job.

Lastly, when directing the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross, I highly encourage the use of the Optional Jewish Council as presented in the Black Book. It is not in the Blue Book. When I've used the Optional Jewish Council, I've been told it adds so much more to the Order and adds context; just a suggestion.

Hopefully these tips will enable a director to not only to direct a great Order but have fun doing it as well!

(Ed. Note: Contributed by Sir Knight Bruce Lawrence, who is an excellent ritualist.)



“Heavenly Father,

we pray tonight that all Sir Knights will always be a beacon unto those in distress, never allow us to forget our obligations that we have taken to help the homeless and the poor, let us serve Thee And Thy Eternal Throne all the days of our life. Let us always remember the obligations that we have taken before Thee at Thy Holy Altar to serve Thee as Christian

Knights, while life may last in us. Bless all of our Commanderies. Bless the Commanders and their officers with wisdom from on high to guide their Commandery in Thy service, and the Grand Commandery of Colorado. Bless the Grand Commander and his officers. Through Jesus Christ our Lord Amen.

Scripture Reading Matthew 5:16

“In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”



The Knights Templar Grand Encampment has published a very well-prepared guide for all new Knights Templar. Many of us likely remember the confusion we experienced when we were newly knighted. We wanted to feel the excitement and newness of having joined a great new Masonic body, but could not grasp the magnitude of difference between Degrees and Orders. Why are we suddenly in uniforms? How do we address each other? How do I properly wear the uniform and what do the different items on the shoulders mean? Is someone going to actually trust me with a sword, and how do I handle it?

The Grand Encampment has published a guide which answers these questions and more. It is well prepared and does a wonderful job preparing each Sir Knight to feel confident in what is expected of him. Our RE Grand Commander of Colorado has directed that each newly made Knight Templar be provided with this guide. The Recorders should take care of this duty, but sometimes we rely on our Brother Knights when our stable is too full. The link to the document is listed

below. Please help any Sir Knight who does not have the document, and is not aware of it, to obtain it, because it will make us all better Knights Templar.

<https://knightstemplar.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/KT-New-Member-Packet-P1-National.pdf>

Flaming Sword Award (discussed in a previous issue)

[https://www.coloradokta.org/files/ugd/ece157\\_217a1f6433414d5e88f1c6ed8d6b9c9b.pdf](https://www.coloradokta.org/files/ugd/ece157_217a1f6433414d5e88f1c6ed8d6b9c9b.pdf)

Colorado Grand Commandery Asylum Editorial

Jered Minter, Grand Sword Bearer

11/21/2022

On Knowledge, Truth, and Politics

The following essay is an abridged version of a recent oration given in another body of Freemasonry. The essay is part editorial and part admission of my current personal philosophy and approach to the subjects of knowledge, truth, and politics. I also want to share some brief thoughts on the writings of Pike on these subjects. I hope that by sharing some of my thoughts, experiences, and research, the reader will find some benefit towards their understanding of the same.

Since making a commitment to learn about the epistemological and philosophical teachings of our fraternity, I have expanded my understanding of truth and knowledge. I often find myself questioning the nature of truth and how my belief in specific “universal truths” is challenged by others who believe differently. My instinct is to argue with those that I disagree with and challenge their beliefs, but I have largely decided not to yield to these instincts. Rather, I endeavor to listen and keep an open mind. I have made this decision based on specific lessons that I have learned through our craft. Specifically, that we should avoid rebuking others for their differing opinions, for someday, after further experience and study, these opinions may become our own. Of course, this is very hard to do and I can’t imagine believing some of the things I hear. But then, I think back to all of the changes in my beliefs over the years and I acknowledge that what seems to be fixed in place, is often movable. This acknowledgment creates uneasiness in me. It is very difficult to not argue with others over their opinions and beliefs. There must be a way to do this that can be enlightening to both parties.

If we accept that it is wise to keep an open mind, is there an appropriate time and place to engage in dialog with others with differing opinions? Can we do this in lodge? Should we do this in lodge? What about when not in lodge? How about around the dinner table during Thanksgiving and Christmas? To better explore and understand these questions, I recently engaged in research into the taboo subject of politics in freemasonry. I began to question the history, meaning, and modern interpretation of the masonic charge that masons should not discuss politics or religion when in lodge. Why should we refrain from these discussions in lodge? Is not the goal of study and rhetoric to explore differing opinions? Wouldn’t a lodge be a safe place to do this? Wouldn’t we come closer to the light if we debated these subjects in lodge?

I am not sure that there is a correct answer to these questions. Some would answer by saying that maintaining the harmony of the lodge is the primary reason that we do not engage in these debates. They assert that for the sake of our mutual happiness, we should avoid dividing ourselves along political or other equally challenging belief systems. Others say that exploring these questions is inherently one of the key purposes for our assembly together. While I do not

profess to know the answer to all of the questions listed above, I do believe that we should consider and discuss them.

In support of these concepts, I offer two quotes from Pike's "Morals and Dogma". The first seeks to answer the question: Can we ever be certain of our understanding of truth?

When men entertain opinions diametrically opposed to each other, and each is honest, who shall decide which hath the Truth; and how can either say with certainty that he hath it? We know not what is the truth. That we ourselves believe and feel absolutely certain that our own belief is true, is in reality not the slightest proof of the fact, seem it never so certain and incapable of doubt to us. No man is responsible for the rightness of his faith; but only for the uprightness of it. Therefore no man hath or ever had a right to persecute another for his belief; for there cannot be two antagonistic rights; and if one can persecute another, because he himself is satisfied that the belief of that other is erroneous, the other has, for the same reason, equally as certain a right to persecute him.<sup>1</sup>

The second summarizes the importance of listening to others and resisting the temptation to be the judge of truth.

In a free country, human speech must be free; and the State must listen to the maunderings of folly, and the screechings of its geese, and the brayings of its asses, as well as to the golden oracles of its

wise and great men. Even the despotic old kings allowed their wise fools to say what they liked. The true alchemist will extract the lessons of wisdom from the babblings of folly. He will hear what a man has to say on any given subject, even if the speaker end only in proving himself prince of fools. Even a fool will sometimes hit the mark. There is some truth in all men who are not compelled to suppress their souls and speak other men's thoughts. The finger even of the idiot may point to the great highway. <sup>2</sup>

Regardless of the appropriateness of debating challenging subjects, masons should always be a good example to others. Masons and non-masons alike should feel confident that when they talk with a mason, their opinion will be listened to and not overtly judged, challenged, or dismissed.

Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. (Matthew 7:1-2)

References:

1. "Morals and Dogma", Page 166. Originally published in 1871 and many times again. 1947 version referenced herein.
2. "Morals and Dogma", Page 56. Originally published in 1871 and many times again. 1947 version referenced herein.



# Knights Templar's Traveling Sword Program

Sponsored by the Knights Templar Association of Colorado

In an effort to encourage and promote inter-Commandery communication, cooperation, fellowship and activation the Knights Templar Association of Colorado is proud to sponsor a *Traveling Sword Program*. The program is simple; visit the Commandery holding the sword and claim it under the guidelines below.

## The Traveling Sword

The Traveling Sword is an exact reproduction of the swords carried by the Knights Templar in the 12<sup>th</sup> Century made in Toledo Spain. Its blade is of tempered steel embossed with 24-karet gold. The hilt, made from a cast of an original Templar sword, is plated with 24-karet gold with silver medallions inset and topped with a Templar Cross.

## The Award

The Traveling Sword Award is a plaque, with a miniature sword, again made in Toledo Spain, mounted in such a way that it can be used as a letter opener. A plate will also be on the plaque with the award's name on it. This plaque will be presented to the Commandery and another to the Commander, each with their name on it. The awards will be presented at the Grand Commandery session in September 2000 to the Commandery which claims the Traveling Sword the most times. In case of a tie, it will go to the Commandery traveling the greatest distance to make the claim(s).

## The Guidelines

1. A Commandery shall hold on to, and maintain in good condition, the Traveling Sword until it is claimed by another Commandery within the jurisdiction of the Grand Commandery of Colorado.
2. A Commandery claiming the Traveling Sword, and the Commandery surrendering the Sword, must notify the Grand Commandery Recorder within 24 hours of the change in location. This will allow any Commandery to call and find out its location at any time in planning its visitation and claiming.
3. More than one Commandery may mount a challenge at the same conclave.
4. The Traveling Sword may be claimed by the visiting Commandery at a stated or special conclave of the holding Commandery. In the event more than one Commandery is present to make a claim it will go to the Commandery with the greatest percentage of their active membership present. For example: Commandery A and B visit Commandery C at the same conclave to claim the Sword. Commandery A has 12 Sir Knights of their total membership of 58. Commandery B has 7 of their total membership of 72. Since Commandery A has 21% of its membership present and Commandery B has 10% of its membership present, Commandery A would lay claim to the Traveling Sword. If two or more visiting Commanderies have the same percentage present at the claiming, then the Commandery traveling the greatest distance will lay claim to the sword (distances measured from stated meeting place). The minimum number of Sir Knights claiming the Triangle at a conclave shall be at least two of the top three dais officers and three other Sir Knights making the total of 5 Sir Knights attending.
5. If a Sir Knight is a member of both visiting Commanderies he may be counted in both totals. However, if a Sir Knight is a member of the host Commandery and the visiting Commandery he may not be counted as part of the visiting Commandery. A Commandery's total active membership shall be that reported to the Grand Recorder as of June 1<sup>st</sup> of the current York Rite Year.

## Grand York Rite Sessions

The Commandery having possession of the Traveling Sword at the end of August, will bring the Sword to the Grand York Rite Sessions and relinquish it to the Right Eminent Grand Commander. The incoming Right Eminent Grand Commander will present the Traveling Sword to the Commandery of his choosing to start the new year of traveling.



*Easter Service*



*Sir Knights on Duty*



*Trouble !!*