

**GRAND COMMANDERY OF OKLAHOMA  
Knights Templar State News for October 2022**

**Web Site**



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## **Grand Commanders Message**

Greetings Sir Knights:

As we approach the beginning of Fall, it is my prayer that we all continue to enjoy the blessings of the Great Creator.

Over the past five months we have discussed five of the six distinct characteristics, Integrity, Humility, Flexibility, Resilience, and Stewardship of servant leaders. We conclude the discussion with the sixth characteristic of Empathy.

### **EMPATHY**

*Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep. — Romans 12:15 (NLT)*

How many times has a friend or family member sat with you when you were hurting? Have you ever received an encouraging note from someone when you needed it most?

Reflect on what it meant for you to have a person truly empathize with you during your struggles.

Empathy for a servant leader is being able to envision yourself in someone else's situation. It helps you to understand how they are feeling.

Empathy is a key characteristic of leadership. It is easy to get focused on tasks and the work that we do. Work is important and accomplishing goals are too! But we must be careful, it is easy to view people as problems to be solved instead of human beings to be loved.

When we take time out of our day to empathize with those around us and put ourselves in their shoes, we become more like Our Savior, Jesus. When Jesus encountered someone who was hurting or in need of encouragement, he regarded them and had compassion for them.

A servant leader must be able to see people through the eyes of Jesus. That is the kind of leader that others follow!

Leadership might seem intimidating. But servant leadership also brings the potential to demonstrate the compassion and love of Our Savior in ways other positions would not have allowed.

Take time today to think about the people God is calling you to lead. And when it is time to make decisions within that role, ask yourself a famous question: “What would Jesus do?”

Sir Knights, as we continue through this Templar year, I pray for the blessings and peace of our Lord over your lives.

In His Service,  
James R. Taylor, Jr.  
R.: E.: Grand Commander



## Veterans Day Devotion

“Pay to all what is owed to them...respect to whom respect is owed, honor to whom honor is owed...” (Romans 13:7)

The dictionary’s definition of Veterans Day is a public holiday held on the anniversary of the end of World War I (November 11) to honor US veterans and victims of all wars. It replaced Armistice Day in 1954.

President Woodrow Wilson described it like this:

*“To us in America, the reflections of Armistice Day will be filled with solemn pride in the heroism of those who died in the country’s service and with gratitude for the victory, both because of the thing from which it has freed us and because of the opportunity it has given America to show her sympathy with peace and justice in the councils of the nations.”*  
President Woodrow Wilson

As Sir Knights, when we think about those words considering our faith in Jesus, we have an opportunity to reflect deeper and truly understand the words, “freed us, peace, and justice.” We are aware that those things come at a cost.

In order to have freedom, justice, and peace, we must have a God that provided the way through His son. We are so blessed to have a Savior who gives us this daily through faith in His son.

We are also so blessed to live in a country where young men and women sign up to defend freedom, peace, and justice. As we take time this Veterans Day to slow down and “respect those

who are owed respect, and honor those whom honor is owed,” let us remember the One who made it all possible by creating freedom, peace and justice through His divine plan. Also, let us be reminded to take time to thank a Veteran for the sacrifice they made and the willingness to help us continue in freedom, peace, and justice.

**Pray with me:**

Lord,

We take time today to lift our brothers and sisters who have signed up to follow in your footsteps and have a willingness to lay down their lives. What a huge sacrifice. You have blessed us with a plan to have freedom, justice, and peace.

We pray for those who have seen the battle for this lived out in front of them. Today we honor the battles they have fought, and the ones they continue to fight.

Bring true freedom, justice, and peace to each one of us by reminding us of the Victory we are guaranteed in Christ.

Amen.

SK Steven Cox  
Excellent Grand Prelate



## Membership: Preserving Templary for the Future

I am an historian and devote much of my efforts to preserving the legacy of Templary for the future. One might be surprised to know that preserving that legacy is directly related to membership, for if we do not grow and prosper, we will join the graveyard of fraternal societies. When I was preparing the second edition of my volume on Oklahoma Templar history, I looked at membership to identify what was happening, and what I found was alarming. In the period from 2013 to 2018, a total of 344 men joined Templary in Oklahoma, but 173 left by suspension or withdrawal. In a 2011 article from *The Boston Phoenix*, Ian Adams of Amicable Lodge in Cambridge noted:

A lot of people become involved in music because they're looking for something higher — or to get girls, which is something higher.

Young men come to Freemasonry for a unique, spiritual, experience they cannot find anywhere else. The men coming to Templary in specific are no different in what they too are pursuing. It is for this reason that Templary must provide a quality experience to attract and maintain members. The Traditional Observance movement in Freemasonry recognizes this desire for unique experiences; Oklahoma Templary could easily build upon that with quality programs for Sir Knights.

For those Sir Knights who bring new men into Templary, the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar of the U.S.A. has a special membership jewel for being the first line signer for a total of ten petitioners. The jewel was created in 1991 and oak leaf clusters are awarded for each additional set of 5 petitioners signed for. The jewel is an excellent way to show one's

commitment to the future of Templary, but I want to issue a challenge to every Sir Knight who signs a candidate's petition for Chivalric Masonry. Do not simply bring men into Templary and consider your work done. Do something to create those unique, spiritual, and quality experiences these men are looking for. This is what will ensure the future of the order and create involved and invested Sir Knights.

SK T.S. Akers  
Eminent Grand Jr. Warden



**Grand Commandery Officers at South Central Conference**



**Trinity Commandery Inspection**