

# Grand Commandery of Massachusetts and Rhode Island December 2023 NEWS



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Grand Commander

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Greetings Sir Knights,

With Thanksgiving Day behind us, we now enter into a season of Thanks. With Christmas fast approaching, every Christian and Knight Templar is thankful for the gift that God bestowed upon us. With the Birth of his son, we were given the light of the world and a promise of immortality. I cannot think of anything that we should be more thankful for.

As we enter this joyous season, I have decided not to write a full article. Instead, this month I am going to include my Christmas Message. This message is normally for the Annual Christmas Observances held within Massachusetts and Rhode Island. I hope you read it, and it helps to remind you of the light that was given to us, and the light that is in each of you.

Be kind to each other, give kindness to all and glorify Jesus in this Season of Christmas.

May Jesus' light guide you throughout the year.

Growing up, my love of Christmas and especially of Christmas lights was never questioned. My parents would always take us out to look at the Christmas lights that decorated so many homes back then. This meant so much to me that I carry on this tradition with my girls to this day. There was always something magical for me about Christmas lights and the feeling that they gave me. Sadly, there seem to be fewer and fewer homes with lights up to bring light to the darkness.

I would lay on the floor and stare at the Christmas lights on the tree for hours. I was so enthralled with the glow of these beautiful lights, that I even had a small Christmas tree in my room to fall asleep to. Christmas has always been so very special to my family and me as it is for, I am sure, all of you. Today, those lights still give me pause and wonder and fill me with hope.

As a child these lights carried different meanings than they do now. As a child they were just beautiful lights that blinked or twinkled and made the room illuminate in so many beautiful colors. They spurred on the imagination of any child. As I have gotten older however, they carry a more spiritual meaning. The lights remind me of that night over two thousand years ago. They remind me of the Star that led to the small child in a manger. The hope, light, and salvation that he brought to us in a dark time for the people of God.

Christmas is a time to be reminded that out of the darkness came a beacon of light. A light that illuminated all of mankind's shortcomings and all his potential as well. In Jesus, God gave us the light that would purify every one of our lives, if we would just be willing to look upon that light with the same wonder and appreciation as a child looks upon Christmas lights.

During this holiday season, remember that Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life." Christmas celebrates his birth, and the beginning of that light that he brought to us. Each time I sit and admire those Christmas lights they remind me of his light and the love it contains. The love that encircles us all.

In this world, try to emulate his light and become a bright point of light in this dark world. If each of you do this you will create a tapestry of lights, like that of Christmas Lights, that will glorify the light and love that Jesus has given to all of us.

Thank you to every Sir Knight, your families and friends who celebrate this Season of Light with us. All your lights shine brighter when we are together. May God bless and keep you all, and from my family to yours I wish you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

James Ian Ogilvie  
Grand Commander

## The Message of Christmas for Us

Christmas holds a special place in the hearts of Templars around the world. It commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ, the central figure of Christian faith, and serves as a reminder of the profound messages that this event conveys. Beyond the festivities and gift-giving, Christmas imparts important lessons about faith, family, and brotherhood, inviting us to reflect on the true meaning of this sacred holiday and how it can enrich our lives. At its core, Christmas is a celebration of faith. The birth of Jesus Christ, as foretold in the Bible, is a testament to the power of belief. Christians are called to emulate the unwavering faith of Mary and Joseph, who trusted in God's divine plan, even when faced with extraordinary circumstances. This event teaches us that faith can move mountains and offers reassurance that, in our own lives, we can overcome challenges through faith in a higher purpose. In order to center our lives around the significance of Christmas through faith, Templars can embrace the Christmas spirit by participating in church services or reenactments of the nativity scene will deepen our connection to the biblical narrative of Jesus' birth, reinforcing the importance of faith. Taking time to engage in spiritual routines like prayer, meditation, and Bible study can serve to fortify our faith and offer moments for personal contemplation throughout the holiday season.

Christmas underscores the importance of family and the bonds of love that tie us together. The Holy Family of Mary, Joseph, and the infant Jesus exemplifies the values of care, love, and unity within a family. It reminds us that family is a cornerstone of our lives and a source of joy, support, and belonging. In order to emphasize the significance of Christmas in our lives through the lens of family, we can dedicate time to be with our loved ones, nurturing connections and crafting enduring memories. We can perform acts of kindness and giving within the family circle, embodying the essence of love and selflessness. Christmas also offers an occasion to mend strained relationships and advocate for forgiveness, thereby reinforcing the message of peace and goodwill.

Christmas is a time when the concept of brotherhood is prominently featured. It teaches Templars the importance of embracing the broader

human family and extending kindness and compassion to all. The birth of Jesus was announced to shepherds, demonstrating that the message of Christmas is for everyone, regardless of their station in life. In order to center our lives around the significance of Christmas through the concept of brotherhood, We demonstrate our commitment to follow our creed of “Feed the hungry, cloth the naked and bind up the wounds of the afflicted” when we contribute to charitable organizations, engage in volunteer work for community initiatives, or provide support to those who are less fortunate, thus exemplifying the spirit of giving. We also promote unity when we engage in community events, worship services, and group activities that promote a sense of togetherness and solidarity, strengthening the bonds of belonging.

Christmas is more than a holiday; it is a message to Christians about faith, family, and brotherhood. It serves as a reminder of the importance of faith in our lives, the significance of family bonds, and the need to extend love and kindness to all members of our human family. By focusing on these core values, Templars can keep the true essence of Christmas alive in their hearts and enrich their lives, ensuring that the holiday remains a source of spiritual growth and inspiration. As we celebrate Christmas, let us heed the messages it conveys and strive to make the world a better place through faith, family, and brotherhood.

God Bless you and yours

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