

# Grand Commandery of New York

## January News



S.K. David R. Barkstedt  
Grand Commander

S.K. David J. Passalugo, Editor

1055 Waverly Dr., Hewitt, TX 76643

[dpassalugo@gmail.com](mailto:dpassalugo@gmail.com), (716) 830-7693

## Faith

A Happy and Healthy New Year, Sir Knights;

Thoughts of a new year and the New Year's Eve celebration remind me of a memory of my childhood. My mother's mother, Nanny, came to live with us when I was young. She was a very strong minded Scottish woman and brought into our home many a Scottish Tradition. On New Year's Eve she taught our family about the Scottish tradition of "First Footing".

The Tradition of the First Footing is practiced by the first person to cross the threshold of your door in the new year—shortly after the "Ball" was dropped in Times Square. It is considered an honor to be someone's "First Footer" and particularly if one is a tall, dark, handsome male. The First Footer should bear gifts consisting of a lump of coal, bread and some coins—symbolizing basic needs for the family in the New Year (heat, food, and some money). We still practice the First Footing in our home on New Year's Eve and realize that we have a lot to be grateful for.

Continuing the opening theme for the year, "Faith"— God's word says that we are saved by grace. "It's through Faith in Christ Jesus and not by our own efforts or works." Ephesian 2:8-9. We are not saved by good works, but we are saved for good works. Those different prepositions make all the difference in the world. Good Works are evidence of salvation, not the cause of it. If there are no works or change of life to follow salvation, then it should be questioned whether the person or Knight is truly saved.

What are the good works of our Grand Commandery and our Constituent Commanderies? There are many. Here's an example:

*(January's Good Works for a Knight Templar and his Constituent Commandery is taken out of General Order No. 1.)*

## Commandery Challenge

**Tactic & Sword Manual**—This is a good time of the year to go back to the basics. Opening, Closing and the Sword Manual will be our normal work. The Tactic and Sword Manual prepares us to be better Knights. All Officers of each Commandery are expected to attend every Commandery Conclave. No Commandery can be expected to do ritual work if they cannot open in full form. An animated video is being developed for every Commandery so you have a visual aid in the opening. Remember everything is in the Tactics Book—you just have to read it.

**Ritual:** One of the greatest hallmarks that sets the Masonic fraternity, especially Knights Templar, apart from all other fraternal or civic organizations is our Knights Templar Orders (Ritual)—especially when the Knight Templar Orders are conducted with precision and dedication. Remember everything is in the plain English Ritual Book—you just have to read it.

If you are not getting emails twice a month from the Grand Commandery, please email Harry Williams [harry.williams@marist.edu](mailto:harry.williams@marist.edu) with you name, email and Commandery name and number and you will be placed on the mailing list.

**“It’s not something we do—it’s something we are”**

#### **Upcoming Events**

Zoomposium January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023. Recorders, DZC, ZC and Grand Line Officers are required to attend.

(Details can be found on the Grand Commandery website <https://nygckt.org/> and on Facebook—Official Grand Commandery Knights Templar of New York)

Lady Eileen and I wish you a Happy and Healthy New Year

Courteously with Faith,  
S.K. Dave Barkstedt, R.E.G.C.  
[dave@eliteconsultantsinc.com](mailto:dave@eliteconsultantsinc.com)

---

#### **Grand Prelate’s Corner**

The term Epiphany means "to show" or "to make known" or even "to reveal." It is the church season celebrated in the Western Christian Church, on January 6th, and lasts until the last Sunday before Ash Wednesday. It represents the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles—the Gentile’s Christmas. The main theme of Epiphany is— Jesus as the light of the world, revealed to all nations, including the Gentiles.

In Western churches, it reminds us of the coming of the wise ones bringing gifts to visit the Christ child, who by so doing "reveal" Jesus to the world as Lord and King. This act of worship by the Magi, which corresponded to Simeon’s blessing that this child Jesus would be "a light for revelation to the Gentiles" (Luke 2:32), was one of the first indications that Jesus came for all people, of all nations, of all races and that the work of God in the world would not be limited to only a few.

The day is now observed as a time of focusing on the mission of the church in reaching others by "showing" Jesus as the Savior of all people. It is also a time of focusing on Christian community and fellowship, especially in healing the divisions of prejudice and bigotry that we all too often create between God's children. It fits with a new beginning—a new year that always arrives with all new possibilities, even that of forgiveness for all. It arrives as the Star in the sky which lights our way to the Christ Child. It's the star that teaches us the foolishness and futility of trying to find Jesus on our own. For God, does the revealing, the leading.

The Wise Men follow like little children. God does the teaching, the showing and the revealing. What is our star today? God's word. It's the star and teaches us that Jesus is the resurrection and life—the only way to heaven. You want peace and joy and purpose. You follow the star, Jesus. You want to know if God really loves you. You look around for a sign. The cross of Christ is your sign. He loves you. He died for you. You are precious to Him. The star teaches us the faithfulness of God.

We think of Abraham. God promised Him descendants as many as the stars in the sky. There were many stars in the OT. The Wise Men see one star, the one we've been longing for—Jesus, the Messiah. God has kept His promise. The star is here to show us our future with Jesus—heaven, paradise. We will shine like the sun. We will be lifted up and exalted, with a new body, no more death, no more sin, no more war. The star points us to the resurrection. Jesus the Christ is the Light of the World—may He shed his luster upon us all. Happy New Year—A blessed season of Light. Amen.

---

### **From the Editor**

Templary has lost a gracious Sir Knight with the passing of S.K. Gil Ferrer in late December, 2022. I knew Gil through our time in the Grand Line of Knights Templar State of New York. Gil was an honorable man; he was a good family man, Mason and friend. As a Mason and Templar, S.K. Gil walked softly among his peers, but carried a big stick.

May he rest in peace with all the faithfully departed—may God bless his soul and keep him forever safe in Heaven. He will be missed. Amen.