

Grand Commandery of New York

March News



S.K. David R. Barkstedt
Grand Commander

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Faith

Sir Knights,

Lent 'Fortieth' is a solemn religious observance in the liturgical calendar commemorating the 40 days Jesus spent fasting in the desert and enduring temptation by Satan. This is according to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, before beginning his public ministry.

Which days are enumerated as being part of Lent differ between denominations—although in all of them Lent is described as lasting for a total duration of 40 days. In Lent observing Western Churches, Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and ends approximately six weeks later— depending on the Christian denomination and local custom, Lent concludes either on the evening of Maundy Thursday or at sundown on Holy Saturday when the Easter Vigil is celebrated. Though, in either case, Lenten fasting observances are maintained until the evening of Holy Saturday—Sundays may or may not be excluded, depending on the denomination. In Eastern Churches (whether Eastern Orthodox, Eastern Lutheran, or Eastern Catholic), Lent is observed continuously without interruption for 40 days starting on Clean Monday and ending on Lazarus Saturday before Holy Week.

Lent is a period of grief that necessarily ends with a great celebration of Easter. Thus, it is known in Eastern Orthodox circles as the season of "bright sadness". The purpose of Lent is the preparation of the believer for Easter through prayer, mortifying the flesh, repentance of sins, alms giving, simple living, and self-denial. In Lent, many Christians commit to fasting as well as giving up certain luxuries in imitation of Jesus Christ's sacrifice during his journey into the desert for 40 days. This is known as one's Lenten sacrifice.

Many Lent observing Christians also add a Lenten spiritual discipline, such as reading a daily devotional or praying through a Lenten calendar, which draws them nearer to God. Often observed are the Stations of the Cross, a devotional commemoration of Christ's carrying the cross and crucifixion. Many churches remove flowers from their altars and veil crucifixes and religious statues that show the triumphant Christ and other elaborate religious symbols may be covered in violet fabrics in solemn observance of the event. The custom of veiling is typically practiced the last two weeks, beginning on

the Sunday, *Judica*, which is called Passion Sunday until Good Friday when the cross is unveiled solemnly in the liturgy.

In most Lent observing denominations, the last week of Lent coincides with Holy Week, starting with Palm Sunday. Following the New Testament narrative, Jesus' crucifixion is commemorated on Good Friday and the beginning of the next week is when we celebrate Easter Sunday. In some Christian denominations Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Holy Saturday form the Easter Triduum.

Through many Christian denominations, it is traditionally a time to stop bad habits and improve oneself. I think including this goal of ending bad habits should include making good habits. One habit that comes to mind is to become a better Christian, a better Templar and by starting to read the Bible and a devotional on a daily basis.

Lady Eileen and I wish all of you a very happy and blessed Easter.

Another educational item to consider is on the Grand Encampments website. There are three courses: Course 1, Templar Ritualist, Course 2, history of Medieval Knights Templar and Course 3, Commissioned Templar Chaplain Program. I encourage all Knights to take advantage of these educational programs as I have.

If you are not getting emails twice a month from Grand Commandery Constant Contact, please email Harry Williams, harry.williams@marist.edu, with your name, email and Commandery name and No. and you will be placed on the emailing list.

"It's not something we do-it's something we are."

Upcoming Events:

March 18, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm, St. George's Commandery No. 37, conferring its Annual Pilgrimage (A "Live" conferral of the 3 Templar Orders). Beukendaal Masonic Temple No.22, Schonowee Ave., Scotia, N.Y. 12302. Reserve your space now. Reservations for Candidates and SK's attending need to be received by Friday, March 10th. Send reservations to: Sir Knight Jordan E. Jaquay, coachjakes12tvc@gmail.com. Please include your name, email, phone, and Commandery.

April 9, GEKT-Easter Sunrise Observance-Arlington, VA - All Knights can attend (see Grand Encampment website).

June 3, Zone 3 Pilgrimage, Saugerties, NY

Courteously with Faith.
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Grand Prelate's Corner

Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is the first principle of the gospel. It is a spiritual gift and it is necessary to our salvation. Faith is a “hope for things which are not seen, which are true” ([Hebrews 11:1](#)). Faith is a principle of action and power that motivates our day-to-day activities. Would we study and learn if we did not believe we could obtain wisdom and knowledge? Would we work each day if we did not hope that by doing so we could accomplish something? Would a farmer plant if he did not expect to harvest? Each day we act upon things we hope for when we cannot see the end result. This is faith. ([Hebrews 11:3](#)) This is the message of faith that we proclaim: “If you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved”. ([Romans 10:8-9](#))

Sin is not a word most people use in their everyday conversation. What is sin, what does that word mean? To put it simply, sin is anything that does not align with God’s good will for us. We sin with our words, our thoughts and our actions. Because we all sin, we all fail to live up to the standards God has for us. The wages of sin is death. We all understand wages. Wages are what we earn for our work. What does our sin earn for us? According to the Scriptures our sin earns us death. The good news of the gospel is that Jesus died for sinners. On the cross Jesus stood in the place of sinners like you and me. He did not die for his own sin because Jesus never sinned. He died for our sins. His death paid our debt. You can be saved by faith. For you are saved by grace through faith. ([Ephesians 2:8](#)) Faith simply means to trust. If you trust that Jesus’ death was enough to satisfy your sin debt, you have salvation.

Salvation doesn’t come from trying hard to be good enough. It doesn’t come from doing certain rituals or achieving a certain religious status. Salvation comes only through faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior of your life.

Trusting in Jesus is the best decision you could ever make. When you trust in Jesus, God forgives you of all your sins. When you trust in Jesus, you have a right relationship with God. When you trust in Jesus, you have eternal life. Amen.

From the Editor

It is the start of the Lenten season and Easter will be upon us soon. May all Sir Knights and their families have a solemn Lenten season in preparation for the celebration of Easter—the resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Believe in Him for He has assured us of eternal salvation.