

Grand Commandery of Massachusetts and Rhode Island

October 2023 News



SK Eugene B. Nichols
Grand Commander

www.mayorkrite.org/grand-commandery

Greeting Sir Knights,

As we approach the conclusion of this Templar Year, I urge you to answer the ever present and future call to serve Christ by being of service to our fellow man, our community and to Templary. We read in Galatians 6:1-5: “Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one test his own work, and then his reason to boast will be in himself alone and not in his neighbor. For each will have to bear his own load.”

Galatians 6 expands on Paul's teaching about living in God's Spirit. It describes how Christians who live in God's Spirit should use His power to treat each other. To begin with, Paul shows that when a brother or sister in Christ gets caught by sin, other Christians should step in instead of looking away. As Christians, we should help to restore the one caught by sin with gentleness and humility. This is one of the ways those in Christ can help us to carry each other's burdens. When the load one of us is hauling around becomes too heavy, others should step in to help that person get through that difficulty. In other words, life in Christ by the power of God's Spirit is not meant to be lived alone. Having said that, Paul encourages Christians to take careful stock of the work they do in the Spirit without comparing themselves to each other. We should be honest with ourselves and take full responsibility to do what is ours to do in following Christ. One of those responsibilities is to share the good things God gives to us with our fellowmen.

In my travels throughout our two-state jurisdiction during this Templar year, I have witnessed many good things happening in our Commanderies. There is a spirit of cooperation among our fraters that is rarely seen in other organizations. When the call for assistance is made, Sir Knights from far and wide answer it with the most precious gift of their time. Our Templars have taken Paul’s words and have put them into action. It is my sincere hope that you will continue to help, aid, and assist one another whenever the need arises.

I am so proud of everyone who faithfully labors for the cause of Templary in our Commanderies and in our Grand Commandery. You all have an important role to play in the success and prosperity of our beloved Order. Much progress has been made but there is much more to do and accomplish in the years to come. I hope and pray that you will give your full support and cooperation to the leaders in your Commanderies and to our Grand Officers. All of these dedicated Sir Knights work very hard to provide you with a most inspirational Templar experience.

If you enjoy being a Christian Knight, share your knowledge and experience with your Masonic brethren and invite them to seal their faith by becoming a Knight Templar. If you enjoy being a Christian Knight, support our Masonic youth, especially the young men of the Order of DeMolay, encourage them follow in the footsteps of Jacques DeMolay. Were it not for my exposure to the teachings of DeMolay-loyalty, toleration, brotherhood-I probably would not have had the opportunity to enjoy Masonry, and most especially Templary.

It has been a pleasure and a great honor to serve as your Grand Commander this year and I look forward to what the future has in store for our beloved Order under the leadership of Sir Knight Ogilvie and our Grand Commandery Officers.

In His Knightly Service,

Eugene B. Nichols
Grand Commander

From the Apartment of the Grand Prelate

“When the Saints Go Marchin’ In”

by

Sir Knight & Rev. Richard Haley, Associate Grand Prelate

The above song title references an old African-American spiritual that arose sometime in the late 19th or early 20th century and has often been associated with and found a prominent place in American jazz music circles, particularly in New Orleans influenced jazz. So what does this song have to do with Commandery?

The last day of October, the 31st, is Halloween with its references to and decorations of ghosts, goblins and other scary characters, kids (and many adults too!) dressed in all sorts of costumes attending Halloween parties and of course trick-or-treating for candy and other treats. All well and good for our secular lives of having fun with friends, neighbors and the children of our lives. But October 31 is actually “All Hallows Eve,” from which the word “Halloween” derived, or “All Saints Day Eve.”

“All Saints Day” is the time on the wider Christian calendar when loved ones in the faith who have passed on are collectively remembered, particularly those who are specifically identified as official “saints” from the well known like St. Francis of Assisi to the obscure like St. Abba the Hermit. I come from a Christian tradition that does not elevate people to “sainthood” but rather understands all faithful Christians as “saints.”

As we all know, Commandery is a Christian-specific Masonic body. As “All Hallows Eve” approaches along with “All Saints Day,” I find myself reflecting on the lives of some Christian men - “saints” now gone - who have influenced me at many levels:

- My father, Earle Haley, a Mason and faithful churchman who, though imperfect as we all are, passed his Masonic and faith legacies on to me and my brother.
- Wor. & Rev. Clinton Macy, a Past Master of my Blue Lodge, an Episcopal priest, a WW 2 veteran with a Bronze Star and Combat Infantry Badge, and a believer in justice who marched for Civil Rights in the 1960’s - a man of integrity who modeled the importance of faith being integrated into the all of life.
- Dr. Raymond Silvernail, a Mason, a physician and a committed Christian who understood and communicated the importance of empathy and hope in all places and facets of life from the good to the not so good.

These are just a few of the Masonic “saints” I have known. As “All Hallows Eve” and “All Saints Day” are just around the proverbial corner, I pray we remember the Masonic saints of our lives and reflect prayerfully and faithfully on what they taught us and through the wise use of memory, still teach us.



The Grand Commandery presented the Order of Merit to SK David A. Ogilvie at Calvary Commandery No. 13 on September 19th



The Grand Commandery presented a Past Commander's Diploma to SK Justin B. Crawford at Springfield Commandery No. 6 on September 25th



The Grand Commander and the Grand Captain General with SK Thomas S. Placzek, Jr. and the newly installed officers of Springfield Commandery No. 6 on September 25th in Feeding Hills