

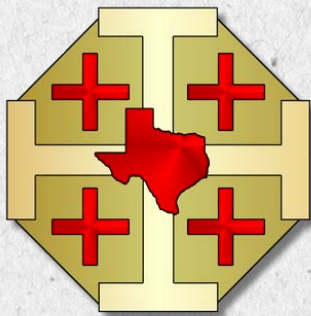
# THE TEXAS TEMPLAR

A monthly publication of the Grand Commandery of Texas



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Sir Knights,

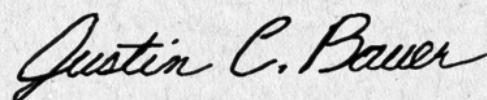
Today marks the first day of Advent. Advent is the season of preparation, the season of prayer, and the season of reflection. As we all make ready to celebrate the birth of our savior, Jesus Christ, let us prepare our hearts and our souls for this glorious event!

Like Advent, this month is a time of preparation for the next Chivalric Year. December marks the beginning of our Commandery installation season. This is a great time for you to prepare your officer lines, to prepare your goals, and to prepare your calendars for the next year.

I hope each of you are able to take time during this busy season to spend with your family - both your masonic and your birth family. Let us all find time for hope, find time for peace, find time for joy, and find time for love.

From my family to yours, we wish you a very Merry Christmas!

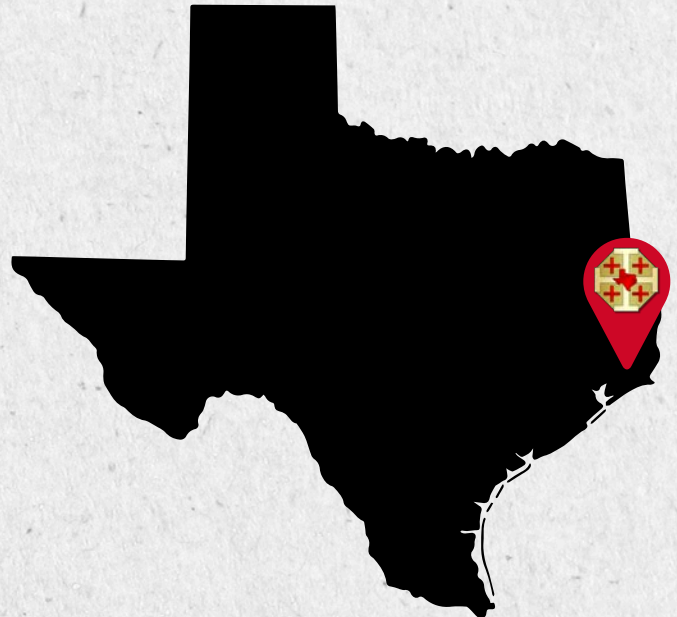
Forever in your service, and In His Name,



Justin C. Bauer  
Grand Commander



# 3RD ANNUAL OUTDOOR ORDER OF THE TEMPLE



## MUSIC IN GRAND TEMPLARY SHOWCASING THE ANTIQUITIES OF TEMPLARY

Every jurisdiction has unique jewels that signify their past or present grand officers. The grand jewel seen here bears the treble clef for a musical role from the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of the State of Wisconsin. While there is no musical role currently within the Wisconsin Grand Commandery roster, this style jewel is still worn by their grand officers.

It is unknown the specifics of this persons who would have worn this jewel, but one can imply it was to represent a role similar to a “Grand Musician,” “Grand Organist,” “Grand Soloist,” or the like.

This jewel currently resides in a private collection.



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## PRELATE'S CORNER

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### A MESSAGE FROM THE EMINENT GRAND PRELATE SK BRAD BILLINGS, KCT

What makes you a Knight Templar?

Of course, we have fancy belts and chapeau's in silver and gold, swords and jewels, etc. But the defining characteristic of a Knight Templar is a man who is both a Freemason and a Christian which qualifies him to join our Order. Further, the distinguishing characteristic of Christians is the salvation we receive from God, offered through the death & resurrection of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Salvation is the reason for and the crowning glory of the Hallowed Sacrifice! Salvation CAN NOT be earned (you could never afford it if it were). It is freely given by God in his plan to redeem humanity through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son. Those who insist that one must live up to the example set for us will always fall short and be disappointed. In the previous message we explored forgiveness and how it is freeing to acknowledge, forgive and move on. To truly accept this amazing gift of God's generosity we must, in fact, learn to forgive ourselves. In our daily shortcomings, our major life mistakes and in every area of our lives that are not consistent with the teachings of the Christian faith. To Hold on to the things we've done wrong creates separation between us and God and denies oneself the awesome and transformative gift of Salvation.

In earlier writings I've expressed my belief that, while we look at life linearly (that is to say each day is a progression of the day before), God has seen all our days and already knows all our faults. With that concept, though Jesus died for our sins over 2,000 years ago, all the mistakes you will make in your lifetime were already seen, accepted, and accounted for in the Great Sacrifice. For me personally, this creates a new possible double meaning for Jesus' last words on the cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

While this reasoning might allow some to say, "if that is the case, why not live a life of sin if I will be forgiven anyway." I do believe that is true and you can if you choose too. However, I would remind you that a relationship with our Creator throughout your life brings forgiveness, peace and an indwelling of the Holy Spirit which would infinitely improve one's life while sin only brings about sadness, deceit and despair.

Salvation is given, will you forgive yourself and accept it? That is really the largest question you will have to answer for yourself in your walk through life. Best part is, its never too late and acceptance of the Greatest Gift is as simple as accepting Jesus as your Lord and Savior, repenting of your sin and accepting God's mercy.

Please pray with me:

***Dear Heavenly Father,***

***I come before you with thanksgiving and praise for this day and this life you have given me. I know I fall short of the great example you have given me daily and I now humbly ask for forgiveness of all my sins that I may claim Your greatest gift of salvation. Let Your salvation make me free from sin that you may turn Your face towards me and bless me and my family. And Lord let me use those blessings to help others and further Your Kingdom on this earth. Remind me, in all things I do, to always give you the honor and the glory and the praise.***

***Amen.***

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## THLPF UPDATE



The Grand Commandery is offering, for a donation to the Texas Holy Land Pilgrimage Foundation (THLPF), a Holy Land Pilgrimage Badge. The badge may be worn by the contributing Sir Knight purchasing the same as a part of his Templar Uniform.

Bronze recognizes a \$250 donor, silver recognizes a \$500 donor, and gold recognizes a \$1,000 donor.

The first 100 Sir Knights to purchase a full badge shall receive a sequentially numbered badge, which shall designate them as one of the Charter Donors.

## GRAND COMMANDER'S UPCOMING TRAVELS



### DECEMBER



15-17 - **Grand Commandery of Mexico**



### JANUARY



16-18 - **Grand Annual Communication**



## EDITOR'S NOTE

SK MICHAEL COTE II



Sir Knights,

I hope everyone had a very happy Thanksgiving! As an educator working in special education, I catch myself asking this simple question more and more this time of year: What are you thankful for? For me, my thanks are endless. Another day, a free country, a loving family, a stable home, a wonderful job, a fraternity of friends and brothers, and much more. But, without Jesus, we would not have these many blessings. This season, Thanksgiving through New Years, is my favorite season.

Please, my Brethren, always remind yourself what you are thankful for, and share those thoughts with your loved ones.

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