

Grand Commandery of New York

January News



John Scott
Grand Commander

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Sir Knights,

I hope you all had a very Merry Christmas. December was joyously busy for Lynn and me. We had many holiday and Christmas events scheduled every week. Both of us found the Commandery Christmas Observances very impressive. Thank you to all Sir Knights who welcomed us so graciously into your Commandery homes for the holidays. I can truly say that the Knights Templar in the State of New York “know how to keep Christmas well.”

The Grand Commandery Virtual Christmas Observance was also a marvelous event that was attended by many Sir Knights from New York and surrounding Grand Commanderies. I greatly appreciate the effort devoted to this event by Sir Knight Charles Roberts, PGC, KCT, Grand Prelate and Sir Knight John Mullin, VEDGC and the officers of the Grand Commandery who participated. Participating in a Christmas Observance is one of our most important obligations. I am grateful the Grand Commandery of New York has an annual program that allows all Sir Knights to celebrate together.

Although we are now in the New Year of 2025 per our calendar, the Feast of Christmas that started on Christmas Eve afternoon and continues until the Epiphany on January 6, actually continues through Candlemas on February 2. Thanks to Google research and the on-line *Britannica Encyclopedia*, I can share that Candlemas is the commemoration of the occasion when Mary, in obedience to Jewish law, went to the Temple in Jerusalem both to be purified 40 days after the birth of her son, Jesus, and to present him to God as her firstborn (See; Luke 2:22–38).

So, unless you are a retailer that already has Easter decorations displayed, there is no real reason why you should take your Christmas decorations down earlier than Candlemas. This revelation will make Lady Lynn very happy!

The next event in our Grand Commandery season will be the Frederick A. Beitter Annual Symposium on January 25, 2025 at the Utica Masonic Temple. This year we will return to a live format and all Grand Line Officers, the Council Officers, Records and Treasurers of the constituent Commanderies and all Zone Commanders and Deputy Zone Commanders are required to attend. In addition, all Sir Knights are welcome and encouraged to attend. The schedule and agenda will be disseminated in separate emails, but you can anticipate that registration will be at 9:30-10:00 when coffee and refreshments will be provided.

The morning will commence with our Invocation and words of welcome. The first session will be the presentation of the new animated opening and closing educational tool. This will be followed by the presentation of the new Membership Initiative and the Revised Templar Boot Camp PowerPoint. We will also have an opportunity to discuss our charities and enhancements to our membership and marketing program.

After lunch we will have a tutorial on the three Templar Orders, focusing primarily on the Order of the Temple. This will be a wonderful day of education and fraternal friendship.

The new Membership Initiative was proposed by Sir Knight Ronald Brown, HPGC, KCT, in recognition of our decreasing membership. The core principle is to encourage all Commanderies to increase their MMS reported membership by at least 5% during the period of September 2024-September 2025. This 5% Growth Initiative is a powerful method that is easy to grasp when you consider that a Commandery with 30 members is only required to increase by two members during the Templar year.

This initiative has been embraced by the Trustees and success in growth will be incentivized by a monetary award to each successful Commandery at the 2025 Annual Conclave. This concept has worked on the Zone level in New York and in other Masonic bodies. I have no doubt this concept that will be enhanced by the excitement resulting from the new educational tools presented at the Symposium will also be successful on the State level.

And now, may “the God of **hope** fill you with all joy and peace and believing that ye may abound in **hope**, through the power of the Holy Spirit,” (Romans 15:13). Lady Lynn and I wish you a year filled with peace, prosperity, and love.

Courteously and in His service,
S. K. John W. Scott, R.E.G.C., K.C.T.

Prelate's Corner

A New Year has come, the old one (or last year) is gone and the new one is here. Where has the time gone, we say, especially us “old timers.” Oh well, they say time is all relative. What of this new year before us. What can we look forward to this coming year?

As the year ends, people all over the world are excitedly gearing up to ring in the New Year. It's a time of reflection on the year gone by—the challenges we faced, the lessons we learned, the people we met and the experiences we had. While the New Year is an arbitrary marker of time, it carries immense symbolic significance for many of us. For some, the New Year symbolizes a fresh start—a chance to put

the past behind us and embrace new beginnings. It's a time to set new goals, make plans and take action towards the life we want to live. For others, the New Year is a reminder to be grateful for what they have and to focus on the present moment.

Regardless of what it means to us personally, the New Year is a universal marker of time that brings people together in celebration, reflection and hope for the future. The transition into a new year is seen as a chance for spiritual renewal and reaffirmation of faith—emphasizing hope, gratitude and forgiveness towards others. Reflecting on the past year is an integral part of embracing the spiritual meaning of the New Year. It offers a moment to pause, contemplate your journey, acknowledge achievements, learn from challenges and set intentions for personal growth.

Engaging in resolution making isn't just about setting goals, but also about aligning your aspirations with your inner values to foster spiritual development throughout the coming year. By immersing yourself in these themes of renewal, rebirth, reflection and resolution making during this transitional period, you can deepen your connection to the spiritual essence of welcoming a new year.

Embrace the opportunity for self-reflection, setting intentions, and fostering a renewed connection with your inner self as you embark on this journey into the New Year. May these spiritual perspectives guide you towards a fulfilling and spiritually enriching new beginning with Christ. So, as we prepare to bid farewell to 2024 and welcome 2025 with open arms, may it be a time of growth, joy and possibility: may we approach it with open hearts and minds. I lift my glass as a toast: Here's to a bright and beautiful New Year ahead for all. Cheers!

From the Editor

To all of you from Lady Debi and me—a happy and prosperous New Year

