



# Pennsylvania Crusader

Since 1948

GRAND COMMANDERY OF PENNSYLVANIA  
[pagrandcommandery.org](http://pagrandcommandery.org)

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## January 2025

Greetings and Happy New Year Sir Knights,

Hopefully, you all had a delightful and restful holiday. The new year is now upon us, and it is an opportunity to revitalize and rededicate ourselves in pursuit of our goals. This is the occasion to form new perspectives, opportunities, and resolutions. Together, we have accomplished much in 2024, and we must advance that energy and momentum into this new year. Now, we should resolve to further expand on our previous successes, reinforcing that drive with the determination to improve upon that which you have so often demonstrated. Maintain those conversations and communications on how we can better serve our mission and tenets. Share your ideas on how we can improve attendance and participation at conclaves and conferrals. Educate new and existing members, emphasizing the benefit and importance of mentoring and training our fraters, and providing needed support and encouragement to build our membership. Continue your generous efforts to provide charitable support both within and outside of our communities.

Together, let us bring forth into 2025 an optimistic attitude of service to better serve our members, their families, and our communities. Let us demonstrate the positive characteristics of Templary and Christian Knighthood. We can do this by delivering new and inspiring programs for conclaves, while maintaining workshops and schools of instruction to polish and improve our ritual and tactics. In concert with the other Masonic bodies, we must work together to strengthen those relationships while educating others on who we are, what we do, and how they can become a Sir Knight. You may also strengthen and advance your own knowledge of these other organizations.

Many of us have made New Year's resolutions, firmly intending to keep them. Some do succeed if the goal is realistic. Together, let us join in the resolution to improve Templary for all. As this new year begins, let us all devote ourselves to keeping this resolution. Begin this year with the renewed determination that together we can do better.

Upcoming events:

Feb 02, 2025 – Stated Conference – Virtual by invitation

Mar 22, 2025 – NW Section Reception -- Brookville

Mar 29, 2025 – SW Section Reception -- Pittsburgh

April 18, 2025 -- Good Friday

April 19-20, 2025 -- 95th Annual Easter Sunrise Service – Alexandria (info: [usagekt.org](http://usagekt.org))

May 29, 2025 – Ascension Day

May 30-31 – 172nd Annual Conclave – Doubletree Greentree Hotel – Pittsburgh

Glaucoma is a leading cause of irreversible blindness in the United States. Glaucoma has no noticeable symptoms in its early stages, and vision loss progresses at such a gradual rate that those affected are often unaware until their sight has already been compromised. January is Glaucoma Awareness Month. The American Academy of Ophthalmology advises the public that the best defense against developing glaucoma-related blindness is by having routine, comprehensive eye exams.

Epiphany, or the Feast of Epiphany, commonly known as Three Kings' Day, happens twelve days after Christmas, on January 6th. It is a day to commemorate the visit that the Magi paid to the baby Jesus. It is also the end of the 12 Days of Christmas, which begins on Christmas Day and ends on the Epiphany. The days symbolize Jesus Christ's birth and the manifestation of his divinity, respectively.

Martin Luther King Jr. Day is observed on the third Monday of January every year. This year, it is observed on January 20th in honor of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the famous civil rights leader who was assassinated on April 4, 1968.

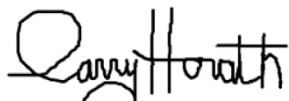
National Spouses Day is celebrated on January 26th. While similar to Valentine's Day, this holiday is mainly dedicated to married couples and lifelong partners. It is an opportunity for couples to show their appreciation for each other. Couples often get caught up in the bustle of life, jobs, families, and other responsibilities so this day reminds them to take some time for each other.

Anniversaries: York-Gethsemane No. 21 – January 19, 1865

“Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let every new year find you a better man.” – Benjamin Franklin

Lady Rebecca and I wish a safe and blessed New Year to all Sir Knights, their Ladies, and families wherever dispersed!

Yours in Templar Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Larry Horath". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

SK Larry D. Horath, Grand Commander

## Grand Prelate's Message

### *Are You Ready to claim your place at the banquet table?*

Revelation 19:9 Then the angel said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!'" And he added, "These are the true words of God."

Now that we have entered the new year, we have all probably taken some time to consider some resolutions. These resolutions usually involve changing some of our habits so that we can become better people. As you consider your various habits, have you ever considered exactly what a habit is? The following article might help you think about this idea, and after you read it, please consider some of those new habits that you might like to have become a regular part of your life. Wouldn't you rather have good habits rule your life instead of bad habits? Think about it!

I Am Habit, I am your constant companion. I am your greatest helper or heaviest burden. I will push you forward or drag you down to failure. I am completely at your command. Half the things you do you might just as well turn over to me and I will be able to do them quickly and correctly.

I am easily managed -- you must merely be firm with me. Show me exactly how you want something done and after a few lessons I will do it automatically. I am servant of all great {people}; and alas, of all failures, as well. Those who are great, I have made great. Those who are failures, I have made failures.

I am not a machine, though I work with all the precision of a machine plus the intelligence of a {mortal}. You may run me for a profit or run me for ruin -- it makes no difference to me.

Take me, train me, be firm with me, and I will place the world at your feet. Be easy with me and I will destroy you. Who am I?

I am habit! ( --The Women's Health Initiative)

What kind of habits do you have, involving your faith? What will your habits say about your belief in God this year? What will your habits be saying to God about what we think about him? Wouldn't it be great if we developed some new habits concerning our spiritual life as individuals and as Knights Templars? Remember "habits" can either help us improve and grow or they can destroy us. What will our habits be this year when it comes to our time serving our Commanderies? What will our habits be concerning our spiritual life and our relationship with Christ be this year?

How we live our life, the things we place first in our life, the habits that we have, say a lot about who we really are. If we really want to follow Christ, if we really believe we are a Christian then we will examine our habits, and this year make those habits ones that mirror the life Christ wants us to live.

I pray that all of us will make resolutions; lived out in the habits we follow this New Year to deepen our faith and become true followers of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We do not know at what hour or day or even year our Lord will return. Will we be ready to stand before him and claim our place at the banquet table?

Take a look at your habits this year, are they helping you grow, are they helping your Commandery grow or are those habits leading you and the Commandery to destruction? Let's get some new habits going this year!!!

God's Blessings

SK. Rev. Robert A. Witmyer  
Associate Grand Prelate



Presentation of a Knights Templar Eye Foundation Sword of Merit to Sir Knight Jabe R. Hammond (center), Nativity Commandery No. 71. The presentation was during the annual Christmas Observance at Nativity Commandery by SK Mark G. Mattern, PGC/Grand Recorder and SK Harry J. Smith, PGC, EC of Nativity Commandery.

