

Grand Commandery of New York

February News



John Scott
Grand Commander

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Sir Knights,

Blessings and best wishes to you all.

The New Year was ushered in with cold and snow. The first weekend of the year was burdened with record cold temperatures and high winds producing dangerous wind chill. Central New York also had lake effect storms that dropped five or more feet of snow. All I can say is good luck to all, stay safe and help your neighbors and Brothers when you can.

The Frederick A. Beitter Annual Symposium at the Utica Masonic Temple was held on January 25 and I wish to thank everyone who attended, presented, or otherwise assisted in this event. I hope you all profited from the day and are as excited and impressed as I am with the new teaching tools and membership enhancements. This will be an exciting year.

Riding the wave of enthusiasm generated by the Symposium, I want to remind you of my hope that this year will be one of revitalization for Templary in New York—and my pastor reminded me recently that the first principle of revitalization is remembering.

In the Bible, after the battles between the Israelites and the Philistines, Samuel raised a large stone to remind the Israelites how God had helped them. He called the stone Ebenezer or stone of help -1 Samuel 7:12. Possibly having our own Ebenezer will help us to revitalize Templary by remembering and

fulfilling our mission to provide every Christian Freemason the opportunity to extend his Masonic journey through the chivalric experience.

In my present capacity, my Ebenezer is the jewel I wear suspended from the red cord around my neck. It is a cross fashioned out of wood from the Connecticut Charter Oak, sheaved in gold. This Jewel reminds me of the Sir Knights who served before me as Grand Commander, who are my inspiration to devote my very best to assist you and advance Templary. I suggest your personal Ebenezer be the remembrance of why you became a Knight Templar; namely, the pride in being a Freemason who openly professes his belief in salvation through faith.

By keeping this memory always in your heart and proclaiming your faith to your Brothers and friends, you will succeed in improving yourself in Templary and reaffirm our motto that every Christian Mason should be a Knight Templar.

I further suggest your Commandery's Ebenezer be your Charter and minutes. The Charter will remind you of when your Commandery started its good work, and the minutes will remind you of the Legions of Sir Knights who met twice a month, each one distinguishing himself by expertly assisting in conferring Orders at almost every conclave, raising money for charity and Freemasonry, and aiding the destitute Sir Knights, their widows and orphans. This memory will help you fulfill our vision that Templary continues to be the most prestigious Masonic organization, comprised of men proud to wear the uniform of the cross and share a common faith, mind, spirit and practice of Christian virtues.

Recall from General Order No. 1 that this is a year of Hope—and I hope you will find your Ebenezer and raise it for the benefit of yourself and Templary. In 1758, Robert Robinson wrote the familiar hymn, ComeThou Fount of Every Blessing. The third verse of this beautiful hymn is:

***Here I raise my Ebenezer; Here by Thy great help I've come
And I hope by Thy good pleasure; Safely to arrive at home.***

I hope you will take comfort in this verse while you consider this message and pray about how we can best revitalize our most prestigious Masonic organization.

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

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

Grand Prelate's Corner

As Knights Templar we should hold to the basic Christian beliefs which provide the foundation of the whole Christian view of life. They determine what we as Christian Knights think about the world we live in, about other persons, and about our own duties and responsibilities in this life. They also determine what we Knights Templar think about the life to come, that is, man's nature and man's destiny.

There are, of course, several Christian beliefs which are not really basic but depend upon other and more fundamental beliefs. Over the next few months, I would like to center my messages on a few basic beliefs that impact all the others. Among the real basic beliefs, the first and most important is ***Belief in God***.

This means not only the belief that God exists (which probably most persons hold in one form or other), but the belief that God is the Creator of the world, the Final Judge of all humankind, the One whose wisdom, goodness and love sustains all things; who has taken the initiative in revealing Godself to humans, and has told us what God's purposes are, and what God requires of those who would serve God; who sent "prophets and wise ones" to declare God's will, and finally sent God's only Son to be the Savior of all who believe in Him and follow His way of life.

One may therefore say that the Christian belief in God underlies all other Christian beliefs and teachings and forms the foundation upon which they rest. Without this central, foundational belief, the other beliefs would float out there with no true meaning. It is also the belief by which all other beliefs must be tested. If they turn out to be inconsistent with the Christian belief in God (i.e. with belief in the character of God as revealed in Christ), then they cannot be viewed as Christian beliefs, and must be given up. Or if they require an idea of God which is contrary to the Christian, they must be discarded altogether.

So, Belief in God is essential to our journey. God is at the heart of our faith; God is its beginning and its end. God is the answer to our deepest questions: where this world came from and where it is going, whether our life has any real meaning or any high end, whether there is a power that we can trust and a help for us in our time of need.