

Templars of the Plains

A Publication of the Grand Commandery of Kansas

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Frederick (Fred) R. Kemp, REGC 2025-2026

From a Commissioned Templar Chaplain

Sir Knight Matthew Rutkowski, PEC, CTC, Junction City Commandery No. 43

The Right Eminent Grand Commander has asked the current Grand Commandery Officers to write articles each month for this supplement.



“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.” - Luke 2:14

Very Merry Christmas greetings and blessings to all Sir Knights and their families. As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, peace may be the last word you'd use to describe what's happening. Our world is full of political unrest and violence; how can we possibly get through the stressful holidays peacefully? Jesus also was born into similar circumstances, though I admit that I'm not sure how crazy the Black Fridays were in the market back then.

Mary was pregnant as a virgin. Joseph knew the child was not his and thus they were forced to flee their home to travel to a distant land. Joseph fled to protect the life of his wife and to protect the life of the awaited baby Jesus. We don't even have to mention Jesus' death. Since I did, let us recall what our Prince of Peace did for us, and allow me to emphasize that peace is unrelated and non-contingent on worldly circumstances or on other people.

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” - John 16:33

Before His death, He said, *“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”* (John 14:27) We, especially as Christian Knights, are encouraged to live in His peace through faith, daily prayer, forgiveness of others, and acts of service. We are to find our inner peace by allowing Him to take away our worry and our anxiety. The angelic proclamation to the shepherds at His birth wasn't a suggestion, it is His will.

Find time in this hectic season to talk to Him in prayer, meditate on His Word, forgive those that have trespassed against you, and help thy neighbor. His love will shine through you and fill you with an unworldly peace, or Shalom.

Merry Christmas my Brethren, I pray for Peace and Love for all of you.

Matthew Rutkowski

Christmas Observance

There are many of the Commanderies in Kansas who gather during their stated annual convocation in December to not only have their election and installation of officers, but to perform a solemn, yet joyful event. These Commanderies gather together after their installation of officers is completed and celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

These are not always large and elaborate events. These meetings include a reading of the Christmas message from the Holy Scriptures, followed by a short sermon, or homily, from either the Prelate or another Sir Knight. Some Commanderies celebrate the evening by having a toast at the end. There are several different ways to host a Christmas observance for your Commandery.



Please remember each year your Recorder receives a message from the Grand Prelate of the Grand Encampment, and a response from the Most Eminent Grand Master of the Grand Encampment. These should be read either at the state communication or during the Christmas observance. No matter how you decide to have those messages read, they are official communications from the Grand Encampment and have to be read at your event or stated meeting.

If you would like to have a Christmas observance this year, but are not quite sure how to host one, you can reach out to Sir Knight Justin Crippen or Sir Knight Patrick Carr. Both have been hosting these events for a while in their own Commanderies. They would be more than happy to assist you by sending you their scripts.

Grand Commander's December Schedule

The Right Eminent Grand Commander of Knights Templar of Kansas, Sir Knight Fred R. Kemp, has been making his Official Visits to the various Commanderies in Kansas. Our Grand Commander is also active in many of the honorary York Rite bodies and he will be attending those meetings during the month of December. The Grand Commander's tentative schedule for December 2025, includes installations at Lodges, Chapters, Councils, and Commanderies, plus in a host of other Masonic bodies which hold their annual communications in December.

While our Grand Commander does not have any scheduled Official Visits during the month of December, do not be surprised if he pays your Commandery a visit during your Annual Convocation or at your Christmas Observance! He may appear unannounced to visit with you, the Sir Knights of the Grand Commandery of the State of Kansas.