

Tennessee Knight Templar News

SIR KNIGHT RONALD J. COATES, RIGHT EMINENT GRAND COMMANDER
GRAND COMMANDERY KNIGHTS TEMPLAR OF TENNESSEE

December A.D. 2025 / A.O. 907

Edited by: Jesse J. Harper, KCT



Southeastern Department Commander Paul Friend presenting the Eminent Commander of Nashville Commandery #1 with a Sword of Merit.

This is an honor bestowed on any Sir Knight or organization that donates a total of twenty-five thousand dollars to the Knights Templar Eye Foundation.

Please be sure to share any photos from your conferrals or events so that they can be publicized.

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If you are aware of any members who are not currently receiving this monthly newsletter, then please have them send an email to Jesse Harper with their name, email address, and Commandery number: jesssharp@comcast.net

Only about half of our membership is receiving this newsletter on a monthly basis. Assist us in getting this newsletter distributed to every Sir Knight on our rolls.



**From the Right Eminent Grand Commander
RONALD JASPER COATES
RIGHT EMINENT GRAND COMMANDER
Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee**

December Message from the Grand Commander

The Life of Saint John the Evangelist



Saint John the Evangelist, known as the Beloved Disciple, devoted his life to following Jesus with a pure heart and unwavering love. He witnessed miracles and profound teachings, inspiring many with his close bond to the Savior. His writings, including the Gospel of John, three epistles, and the Book of Revelation, have enriched the faith of countless believers. His gentle yet passionate spirit reminds us to seek a deep personal relationship with God and to spread His message with grace.

Witness of Miracles: He saw Jesus heal the sick and raise the dead, testifying to his divine power.

Spirit of Revelation: His visions and writings illuminate the mysteries of faith and eternal life.

Saint John the Evangelist is celebrated for his role as the voice of divine revelation. His writings help believers understand the mysteries of God's love and mercy. Through his Gospel and the Book of Revelation, he reveals how God's truth overcomes all darkness; this patronage of Saint John is a beacon for theologians and students of divine wisdom. His simple yet profound message of love and unity continues to guide those who study the mysteries of faith. His writings offer a treasure of spiritual insights that deepen pure understanding of God's mercy and our relationship with Him.

Source of Spiritual Wisdom: His text invites reflection on the nature of God's love and the call to live in harmony with His will.

Model of Humility: The simplicity of his faith inspires scholars to pursue truth with a humble heart.
Encourager of Devotion: His words strengthen the resolve of those who dedicate their lives to studying and teaching the Gospel.

Ways to Honor Saint John the Evangelist: Attend a service in his honor, contemplate his Gospel writings, engage in quiet prayer and meditation, share his teachings with others, and perform acts of charity and service.

Honor his compassionate spirit by reaching out to those in need through volunteer work and acts of kindness. Let your actions reflect his love for humanity and serve as a testimony to your faith.

Respectfully in your service,

Ronald J. Coates
Right Eminent Grand Commander
Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee

GENERAL ORDER NO. 4

To the Grand Commandery, Knights Templar of Tennessee, and to the Officers and Sir Knights of the subordinate Commanderies:

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. ² (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)

³ And all went to be taxed, everyone into his own city. ⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

⁵ To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. ⁶ And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. ⁷ And she brought forth her firstborn son, wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

⁸ And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. ¹⁰ And the angel said to them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. (KJV, Luke 2:1-11).

On that very special and holy night a little over 2000 years ago, God gave mankind the greatest gift we would ever receive. Here God gave himself to us in the form of a baby. Can you imagine the joy that was in God that night? Jesus came to make a difference. How many lives have been changed because of this one event and the life of this one little baby? The right person at the right time can change history. It is a very true statement that Jesus changed the course of history by freeing mankind of the bondage of the Old Law, shaking up the Jewish High Council and changing the way that we worship God. Christmas is such a special time of the year. But it is not just about pretty lights, beautiful music and getting together with friends and family or the exchange of gifts. It is about God taking on flesh as a baby, exposing himself to the harshness of the world, and offering himself as the mediator between God the Father and His Creation

This General Order must be read at the first stated Conclave following its receipt and made a part of those minutes.

In His Service,



Ronald Jasper Coates
Grand Commander

From the Eminent Grand Prelate

Sir Knight Dickie W. Johnson, PGC

Prelates Devotion for December

The Meaning Of Christmas

Galatians 4:4-5

"4 But when the appropriate time had come, God sent out his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, so that we may be adopted as sons with full rights."

The 2nd chapter of Luke relates to us the great Christmas Story. We have heard it read, sung songs about it, sent and received Christmas cards about it, and attended Christmas programs that retold the great story of God's gift to humankind, but for many, Christmas will soon be over for another year. A cartoon jingle reminds us that Christmas should be in our hearts all year long. "We've been to party after party and shopping at the mall, but now it's time to celebrate the reason for it all."

Galatians 4:4-5 tells us the truth about the birth of Jesus, the reason for His coming, why He died on the cross, and the great hope we all share. There are three things I would like to share about the coming of Jesus: The divinity of Jesus, the humanity of Jesus, and the great hope we share.

There are many who do not believe in the divinity of Jesus. They admit that He was a great teacher, that He was a prophet, and a great spiritual leader, but they still deny that Jesus is the Son of God. To deny the deity of Jesus is to deny His power and glory. This is the power He used to heal the sick, to raise the dead, and to forgive sin. To deny the deity of Jesus is to deny the authority that came from God the Father. Without this authority, His teachings and death make Him no greater than any other person executed for his beliefs. This makes Jesus a martyr, but no more. May we always remember how John began his gospel about Jesus. (John 1:1, 14)

Many others deny the humanity of Jesus. They admit that Jesus is God's son but do not believe that He was fully human. They claim that his deity exempted him from the temptations and pains of mortal life. But to deny the humanity of Jesus is to deny our fundamental belief as Christians: *"The word became flesh and dwelt among us."* If Jesus was not fully human when He dwelt among us, how could He die for our sins? We are no longer under the law, for we have been redeemed by His death. Jesus paid a debt that we could not pay!

John 1:12 tells us of a great hope we share. *"Yet to all who received Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God."* Through Jesus we receive the great gifts of life, joy, power, and love. Through Jesus we receive the gift of life eternal and the hope of resurrection! Through Jesus we have the assurance that our Heavenly Father will watch over us and keep us, even as we pass from this life to life eternal!

Sir Knights, I think that is the real meaning of Christmas!

In His Service,

Dickie W. Johnson, PGC
Eminent Grand Prelate
Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee

November Inspections



Nashville Commandery #1
Distinguished Attendee: Southeastern Department Commander Paul Friend



Dickson Commandery #41
Distinguished Attendee: Most Worshipful Grand Master Doug Dreaden

Creating Engaged New Members One Sir Knight At A Time

By Sir Knight Russell L. Schlosser, Right Eminent Grand Commander of Illinois

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It is no secret that some experiences in life are better suited to groups, while others are intended more for the individual. Although surrounded by friends, the experience of being raised or knighted alone conveys a powerful sense of individualization that is inevitably compromised to some extent when conferred in a group of candidates, even though each candidate may be raised or knighted individually in sequence.

For the sake of expediency and practicality, Masonry has resorted to conferring degrees upon candidates in small groups and, on certain occasions, upon larger gatherings during so-called festivals. In today's busy world, these events are deemed essential to the timely conferral of degrees for those candidates who might not otherwise find it practical to join our ranks. While such candidates are no less "Masonic" than others, at the very least, they are deprived of solely individualized experiences. With some notable exceptions, observation suggests that "festival" candidates remain less bonded and less engaged with their Masonic bodies, as is reflected in higher absenteeism and suspension rates.

This is simply human nature. We tend to bond better with those who make us feel special and who pay attention to us as what we are—unique individuals. Statistics may differ over time, but it often seems that the more candidates a Masonic body may process in mass events, the lower their relative attendance at stated meetings and social occasions, both in sheer numbers and as a percentage of their membership base.

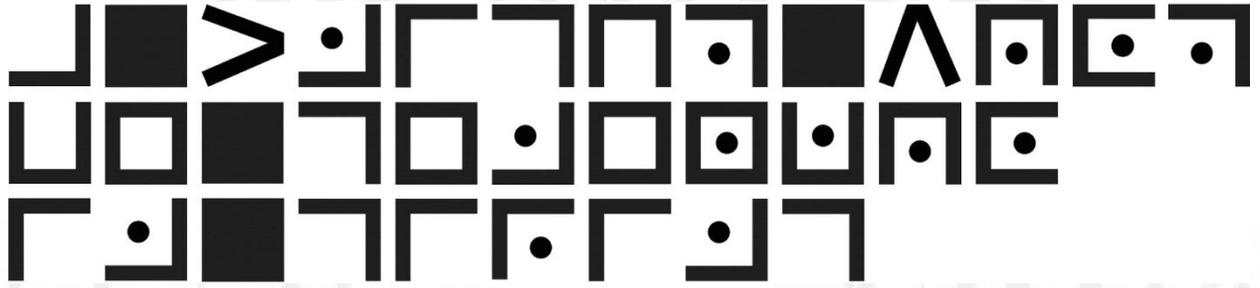
Having said that, group degrees do have their place, such as full-form Red Cross and Malta conferrals (and of course the degree of Royal Arch Mason mandates three candidates at one and the same time), but we should endeavor to respect the intrinsic value of devoting our attention to the knighting of each individual candidate. Whenever we do so, Commanderies should make it clear to candidates that this effort was made to convey the value of an individualized experience.

In instances when lone knightings are not possible, it is the duty of the Commandery to explain to each candidate prior to receiving the Order of the Temple that although he may be knighted on the same day with others, a singular honor is being bestowed upon him. He is bound personally as a man and a Christian Mason in a sacred oath with our Lord and Savior—irrespective of the presence of other candidates.

Throughout York Rite Freemasonry, every candidate is ritualistically reminded that although each man is born into a world of countless others of which he is but one member, his soul shall someday stand alone before his Creator and Supreme Judge. Thus, each Commandery has a responsibility to knight every member as "individually" as possible, sincerely and proficiently. Several Commanderies around our state have a reputation for doing an outstanding job at this.

This approach may so deeply affect the candidate that we might discover we have added not just another member to our ranks, but an engaged Sir Knight. As such, he may be motivated to assist in recreating more individualized experiences for successive new members in the same manner that his knighting made an indelible impression upon him.

Something to Decipher



Columbia Commandery #47 Charter Presentation



Right Eminent Grand Commander Ronald Coates presenting Columbia Commandery #47 with their charter during his homecoming at Dickson Commandery.



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MISSION

The mission of the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Tennessee is to provide every Christian Freemason in Tennessee the opportunity and resources to develop, be engaged in, and exemplify a Christian chivalric lifestyle.

THE VISION OF THE GRAND COMMANDERY OF KNIGHTS TEMPLAR OF TENNESSEE

The Knights of the Grand Commandery of Tennessee are a group of men who share the Christian faith, exemplary character, a dedication to excellence and the service of others, and a desire to share the chivalric experience with other Christian Freemasons. Our Knights are actively engaged with one another in accomplishing this goal and in maintaining this standard of lifestyle and behavior.

Request for Submissions!

Sir Knights – We need submissions for the Tennessee Knight Templar News. Is your Commandery going to confer any of the orders soon? Did you have some sort of unusual or fun event? Send us an article to share with the other Tennessee Knights and include photos if you have them.

We would also like to have your thoughts and ideas about how we can make Tennessee Templary more fun and exciting. Send us an article!

Please send news and events going on in your Commandery to:

TNKTNewsEditor@gmail.com