



RIGHT EMINENT GRAND COMMANDER'S MESSAGE



Grand Commandery Of Knights Templar Of The State Of California

MARCH 2026 NEWS

Sir Knight
JOSEPH DONGO, KYGCH, KTCH, KCT
Grand Commander

**** The Calendar is the Catalyst: Turning Chivalry into Action ****

Sir Knights,

March is the bridge between preparation and performance - the month when good intentions must become organized action. If February was about launching the Lifeblood of Chivalry, then March must be about scaling it - Commandery by Commandery, Lodge by Lodge, community by community.

And if we remember only one directive this month, let it be this:

Marching Orders: Put the Mission on the Calendar.

Because the calendar is more than dates - it is a declaration of priority. A mission that isn't scheduled is a mission that will eventually be postponed. Momentum does not live in wishes; it lives in commitments we can point to, plan around, and rally behind.

Why This Matters Strategically: Leadership Development Through Mentorship

Our Strategic Plan calls us to invest in leadership development for current and future leaders through structured training and - most importantly - mentoring programs that engage newer members and cultivate leadership.

Here is the truth we all recognize: a program can be announced in one day. A legacy is built only when leadership is reproduced - intentionally. So, March is not only about organizing blood drives. March is also about organizing leaders - creating a simple pathway where a new Sir Knight can move from: observer → helper → co-leader → champion.

Because when mentorship is strong, the mission doesn't depend on one personality, one office, or one year. It becomes a living system - steady, transferable, and resilient.

Burbank Officers' Conference: Where Alignment Becomes Action

Over Valentine's Day weekend, we completed the Officers' Conference in Burbank to prepare for our Grand Sessions in May. This gathering matters because it is where alignment is forged, where experience meets vision, and where we commit to moving together rather than drifting separately.

Planning is not the work - planning is the promise that the work will be done well. And our Order deserves nothing less.

Burbank strengthened our "north star." Now March requires us to take the next step: build the calendar, build the teams, and build the habits that will carry that vision into visible service.

Red Bluff: A Birth Homecoming, a Reception, and a Ten-Year Reminder

Soon after, I returned to my Masonic hometown for a three-way reception in Red Bluff, a place that carries deep meaning for me. About a decade ago, it was there that Sir Knight Bill McBroom extended a life-shaping

invitation: to join the Grand Commandery progressive line.

I did not fully understand the magnitude of that moment at the time; few of us do, standing at the threshold of a calling. But looking back, I see it clearly:

Mentorship is how the Order secures its future.

A hand extended. A door opened. A path illuminated. And that is why we must never treat today's work as "just another program." We are building continuity, one relationship at a time, one developing leader at a time.

Lifeblood of Chivalry: From Launch to Lift

We launched the **Lifeblood of Chivalry Campaign** last month - and momentum has already begun: four blood donations completed, with more scheduled. That is a strong start, and I am grateful to every Sir Knight and family member who has stepped forward.

But let us be clear: a statewide campaign does not succeed on inspiration alone. It succeeds when we turn inspiration into organization.

The March Pivot: From "I Donated" to "We Organized a Drive"

Sir Knights, people want to help, but they need a plan. The public doesn't follow enthusiasm; it follows leadership with structure.

That means each Commandery should do more than encourage donations. Each Commandery should pair a blood drive with:

- a Blue Lodge, and
- the wider community (churches, workplaces, civic partners, families).

Not because we need credit, but because we need capacity. And because partnership is leadership in action.

The Leadership Multiplier: Turn Every Drive into a Mentorship Engine

Here is the hidden opportunity: every Lifeblood event is also a leadership development lab.

A new Sir Knight may not be ready to lead a Commandery yet.

But he can lead a role. And a role, well done, becomes confidence. Confidence becomes commitment. Commitment becomes leadership.

So, when you schedule a drive, assign roles like this:

- Newer Sir Knight: Donor recruitment lead (calls/texts; confirms appointments)
- Mid-line officer: Lodge & community partner coordination
- Experienced Sir Knight: Day-of logistics and continuity planning
- Recorder/Secretary support: Results reporting and next-date scheduling

That's mentorship with a mission; no lecture required.

A Simple "Commandery Blood Drive Playbook" (Do This This Month)

If you do nothing else in March, do these five steps:

1. Pick the date (don't wait for perfection, choose a workable day)
2. Secure the host partner (blood center + location)
3. Co-host with a Blue Lodge (capacity + visibility + shared manpower)
4. Assign four roles (Coordinator, Recruiter, Promoter, Reporter)
5. Schedule the next drive before you leave the first one (momentum lives in the calendar)

This is how good men become great teams and how great teams become a statewide movement.

The March Charge

Sir Knights, our Strategic Plan calls us to be Faithful Stewards of Chivalry and Community. Stewardship means we don't just do good, we organize good so it can be done again, by more people, with greater impact.

So, in March, I ask every Commandery:

- Don't merely announce the Lifeblood Campaign, calendar it.
- Don't merely hope donors appear, recruit them.

- Don't merely act as individuals, partner as York Rite and as Blue Lodge men.
- And don't merely run an event, mentor a new leader through it.

May we arrive at Grand Sessions in May not only with speeches and reports, but with dates scheduled, drives executed, leaders developed, lives touched, and the public witness of Christian knighthood made plain.

And once more, let it ring across the jurisdiction:

Marching Orders: Put the Mission on the Calendar.

Let's be:

the Knight who gives.

the Knight who organizes.

the Knight who brings others.

in Faith, in Service, and in Chivalry,



Joseph Dongo
Right Eminent Grand Commander

