



NEWS for July 2026
SK Joseph L. McAlister, REGC
Web Site: www.yorkritewa.org/gckt/
SK Bryan D. Bechler, REPGC, IKT, COH, KCT, MSA
Editor: bry.kat@frontier.com

Greetings Sir Knights,

Benjamin Franklin famously outlined a system of 13 virtues in his autobiography to achieve moral perfection. Rather than an explicit set of etiquette rules, these served as his personal framework for character building, social interaction, and daily civility.

Franklin's 13 virtues focus on self-improvement, covering areas like temperance, order, industry, and humility. He sought to master these through a disciplined, weekly tracking method. He would focus on one virtue per week, rotating through all 13, and re-starting again.

His broader approach to social conduct is captured by his advice to be civil, sociable, and cautious in intimacy. Detailed breakdowns of these principles can be found through historical and educational resources.

1. **TEMPERANCE** - Eat not to dullness; drink not to elevation.
2. **SILENCE** - Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself; avoid trifling conversation.
3. **ORDER** - Let all your things have their places; let each part of your business have its time.

4. **RESOLUTION** - Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve.
5. **FRUGALITY** - Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; i.e., waste nothing.
6. **INDUSTRY** - Lose no time; be always employ'd in something useful; cut off all unnecessary actions.
7. **SINCERITY** - Use no hurtful deceit; think innocently and justly, and, if you speak, speak accordingly.
8. **JUSTICE** - Wrong none by doing injuries or omitting the benefits that are your duty.
9. **MODERATION** - Avoid extremes; forbear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.
10. **CLEANLINESS** - Tolerate no uncleanness in body, clothes, or habitation.
11. **TRANQUILLITY** - Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.
12. **CHASTITY** - Rarely use venery but for health or offspring, never to dulness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation.
13. **HUMILITY** - Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

Knowing virtues is like having a map; adopting them is actually taking the journey. And when it comes to the journey, Franklin advised:

My intention being to acquire the habitude of all these virtues, I judg'd it would be well not to distract my attention by attempting the whole at once, but to fix it on one of them at a time; and, when I should be master of that, then to proceed to another, and so on, till I should have gone thro' the thirteen; and, as the previous acquisition of some might facilitate the acquisition of certain others, I arrang'd them with that view, as they stand above. Temperance first, as it tends to procure that coolness and clearness of head, which is so necessary where constant vigilance was to be kept up, and guard maintained against the unremitting attraction of ancient habits, and the force of perpetual temptations. This being acquir'd and establish'd,

Silence would be more easy; and my desire being to gain knowledge at the same time that I improv'd in virtue, and considering that in conversation it was obtain'd rather by the use of the ears than of the tongue, and therefore wishing to break a habit I was getting into of prattling, punning, and joking, which only made me acceptable to trifling company, I gave Silence the second place.

I challenge each of us to take up these virtues and exemplify them through our actions.

In His Name,

**SK Joseph L. McAlister, REGC
Grand Commandery of Knights Templar in Washington**