

Grand Commandery Knights Templar of the District of Columbia

Monthly Knight Templar Magazine Supplement Message – August 2026

Editor: Sir Knight Carter L. Diggs, REPGC



Sir Knight Raymon W. Bacchus, KTCH
Grand Commander

Greetings Sir Knights,

Greetings Sir Knights,

August carries us deeper into the warmth of summer while inviting us to prepare our spirits and minds for the renewed labors of the coming months. The summer weather also allows us to wear our authorized Summer Uniforms, which may be worn from 1 June through 30 September whenever we gather in fellowship and brotherhood.

On Independence Day, Sir Knight Charles W. “Buddy” Wagner, KCT, REPGC, Eminent Grand Assistant Instructor General, once again generously drove his convertible in the Independence Day Parade. I was privileged to ride prominently in the rear while Sir Knight Philip J. A. Palmer Sr., EPC, KTCH, accompanied him in the front. Brethren participated together as one united body beneath the banner of the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia. It was a memorable day filled with patriotism, family, fellowship, and the visible strength of our Masonic bonds.

From 23 through 26 July, I was privileged to represent our Grand Jurisdiction at the General Assembly of the York Rite Sovereign College of North America in Des Moines, Iowa, alongside Sir Knight Teko A. Foly, KCT, REPGC. Our Department Commander, several other representatives from our Department, and members from many other jurisdictions were also present.

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It was a delightful gathering that provided valuable opportunities for fellowship, learning, and the strengthening of relationships throughout the York Rite. We also had the good fortune to tour the Scottish Rite Masonic Center, an extraordinarily beautiful facility. I strongly encourage you to visit it should you ever have the opportunity.

It was also a great pleasure to join many Sir Knights from our jurisdiction in the celebratory activities commemorating our nation's 250th anniversary, organized by the Grand Lodge of the District of Columbia from 29 July through 1 August. The celebration included private tours of the United States Capitol and the National Archives.

Lodge Sine Nomine No. 10,000 of London, under the United Grand Lodge of England, conducted a rare and historic communication at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in Alexandria, Virginia. The occasion brought English Masonic tradition to one of America's most significant Masonic landmarks and was an extraordinary experience for all who attended.

We also attended a gala at the Library of Congress, where the setting was truly magnificent. Ambassador James S. Gilmore III, former United States Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and General David H. Petraeus, United States Army, Retired, former Director of the Central Intelligence Agency, addressed those assembled and shared thoughtful insights regarding the significance of our nation's 250th anniversary. Their reflections encouraged us not only to celebrate the achievements and sacrifices of the past, but also to consider our responsibility to preserve and strengthen the principles upon which our nation was founded.

The celebration also included an informative program titled "Freedom: The French and United States Partnership," hosted at the Embassy of France. His Excellency Laurent Bili, Ambassador of France to the United States, welcomed those assembled and spoke eloquently about the enduring friendship between France and the United States. His thoughtful remarks gave special meaning to an evening devoted to liberty, shared values, and the historic partnership between our two nations.

Freemasons from around the world traveled to Washington for these events. In addition to the remarkable settings and programs, the celebration provided invaluable opportunities to renew existing friendships, establish new ones, and build bonds that I am confident will endure for many years.

Although the pace of activity remains measured during the summer, the work of preparation is no less essential. **Columbia Commandery No. 2 will host the Grand Commandery School of Instruction on 17 August.** This will be an invaluable opportunity for officers and members to refine their ritual proficiency, deepen their understanding of Templar symbolism, and strengthen the discipline that defines our work. All Sir Knights are strongly encouraged to attend. Please respond to the notice distributed by your Recorder so that appropriate preparations may be made.

Our annual D.C. York Rite Picnic will be held on 12 September from 3 to 7 p.m. at Fort Hunt Park, Group Picnic Area C 002. This cherished occasion provides members and families from across the York Rite with an opportunity to enjoy fellowship, strengthen friendships, and reaffirm the unity that sustains our work. Please make plans to join us and help make this gathering a meaningful celebration of our shared bonds.

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The 73rd Triennial of the General Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons International and the 49th Triennial of the General Grand Council of Cryptic Masons International will take place from 29 August through 2 September. Sir Knight Teko A. Foly, KCT, REPGC, currently serves as General Grand High Priest of the General Grand Chapter, making this gathering a particularly meaningful homecoming for him and our jurisdiction.

Because the Triennial is being held in our own city, I encourage every Sir Knight who is able to support our own Sir Knight Foly and help welcome our visiting Companions. Registration and event information are available at www.yrtriennial.org.

Your Grand Officers continue their labors as they complete the second round of quarterly outreach and finalize preparations for the next cycle of Commandery visitations. These responsibilities help ensure that our members remain connected to the Grand Commandery and that the needs of each Commandery are heard and addressed with care, understanding, and purpose. Their service helps sustain the unity and vitality of our jurisdiction as we prepare to enter the most active portion of our Chivalric Year.

August also encourages us to reflect upon the virtue of friendship. The bonds we share, built through fellowship, conversation, teamwork, encouragement, and mutual respect, form the foundation upon which our Chivalric work stands. Whether expressed in the asylum, at social gatherings, through a telephone call, or in a quiet word of support, these acts of friendship strengthen the fabric of our Order.

The quieter moments of summer also provide an opportunity for spiritual introspection. As we reflect upon the first portion of our Chivalric Year, let us consider both what we have accomplished and where our attention is still needed. Let us use this time to fortify our spirits, renew our dedication, and prepare ourselves to serve with clarity, humility, and purpose.

As August unfolds, may it inspire us to deepen our bonds, refine our work, and approach the coming months with renewed commitment to our duties, our fellow Sir Knights, and the Christian virtues at the heart of our Knighthood.

With all Knightly Courtesy, I remain sincerely and fraternally yours in friendship and service,

Ray

Raymon W. Bacchus

Grand Commander (2026-2027)

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Motto: *Dux Servit (A Leader Serves)*

Theme: *Building Bonds*

Guide: *FAITH · VIRTUE · HONOR · COURAGE · CHARITY*

A year grounded in Faith, guided by Virtue, lived with Honor, strengthened by Courage, and expressed through Charity.

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Upcoming Events:

- Summer Uniform Authorized
1 June through 30 September 2026
- Grand Commandery Annual School of Instruction hosted by Columbia Commandery No. 2
17 August 2026
- 73rd Triennial of the General Grand Chapter Royal Arch Masons International and 49th Triennial of the General Grand Council Cryptic Masons International - Capital Hilton, D.C.
29 August through 2 September
- International Day of Charity
5 September 2026
- Communication Initiative (Virtual) - Elected Grand Officers and the Commander of each Constituent Commandery
8 September 2026
- Annual D.C. York Rite Picnic at Fort Hunt Park, Group Picnic Area C 002
12 September 2026, 3:00 PM to 7:00 PM
- Mid Atlantic Department Conference
25 through 26 September 2026
- York Rite Emerging Leaders Program
25 through 26 September 2026
- Semi Annual Grand Conclave at Singleton Lodge Hall
3 October 2026
- MESH Charities Annual Gala
17 October 2026
- Grand Commandery of Maryland
23-24 October 2026
- All Saints' Day – Honoring Virtues
1 November 2026
- Communication Initiative (Virtual) - Elected Grand Officers and the Commander of each Constituent Commandery
10 November 2026
- Grand Lodge Annual Communication
21 November 2026