



GRAND MASTER'S RESPONSE

CHRISTMAS 2026

To the Right Eminent Grand Prelates, the members of the Committee on Religious Activities, and to all Knights Templar wheresoever dispersed:

A profound appreciation from Lady Kim and me to the Right Eminent Grand Prelates and the members of the Religious Activities Committee for their most gracious toast this Christmas Season. Our world continues to be one of unrest and uncertainty. However, we do have a reason during this blessed season to celebrate.

Historical Knights Templar Christmas Meaning:

- **Vigilance and Protection:** In the Crusader Kingdom of Jerusalem, Christmas was a high-risk time due to massive crowds of pilgrims traveling to Bethlehem and Jerusalem. The Templars viewed Christmas not just as passive celebration, but as an active duty of military and spiritual protection-guarding gates, escorting travelers, and keeping order so others could pray safely.
- **Askesis and Devotion:** Alongside the medieval traditions of the 12-day winter festival, the warrior-monks maintained monastic discipline, including periods of Advent fasting, prayer, and mandatory attendance at Christmas Mass.
- **Symbolic Watch:** Their meaning of Christmas was tied to guarding a promise-protecting the physical and spiritual cradle of the faith against tension and conflict.

As I conclude this, my final Christmas Message as your Grand Master; Lady Kim and I pray that you all have a blessed and rewarding Holiday Season.

Courteously,

David J. Kussman ☩

David J. Kussman, GCT
Grand Master