



**GRAND COMMANDERY KNIGHTS TEMPLAR
OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK**

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The Commander of each Commandry is hereby ordered to read this General Order at the first Conclave following receipt:

General Order No. 1

To: The Grand Line Officers, Past Grand Commanders, Commandery Officers, and all Sir Knights of the Constituent Commanderies of the Grand Commandery

CHRISTIAN GREETINGS SIR KNIGHTS,

The theme for the Templar year 2024-2025 is:

HOPE

We are all Christian Masons; men who openly profess our faith and belief in our Savior, Jesus Christ. We know God is always with us because he assures us that, *“I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”*
Isaiah 41:10 (NIV)

However, we also know life is difficult. Every day we face personal struggles that seem insurmountable. We also face challenges in our Templar lives as we see good Sir Knights failing to participate in our conclaves, our membership declining, and our charities not fully subscribed. When I feel overwhelmed by these challenges, one of my *Life Versus* comes to mind: “*And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.*” **Romans 5:2-5 (NIV)**

This year will be one of *Hope* as we return to our fundamentals. During this Templar year I *Hope* you will remember why you became a Knight Templar and fondly recall the good Sir Knight who introduced you to Templary. I submit for most of you it was not the uniform, chapeau, and sword, but the pride in being a Freemason who openly professes his belief in salvation through faith. If your recollections can rekindle the excitement you felt when you took your orders, it will be contagious and spread to other Sir Knights in your Commandry, Zone, and throughout New York State. Through this excitement, we can use our Masonic teachings and Christian Faith to enhance our lives and experiences; attract new Sir Knights and restore others; and renew our commitment to advance the principles of Charity, Christian Fellowship, and Brotherly Love.

Starting today I *Hope* you will all renew and enhance your commitment to Templary and your Commandery. Receive a petition from a worthy Companion and mentor him through the orders and his introduction into your Commandry as he will be your replacement. Contribute to our charities to the extent that you are able. Finally, commit to yourself that you will improve your proficiency in our beautiful orders so that every Commandery and Zone in the State of New York will have the ability to confer our orders.

I realize that this will not be easy, but I know you will succeed because you are Sir Knights who are distinguished from the rest of mankind by the “unrestrained rectitude of your conduct.” You are individuals who would be true followers of Christ even if there were no divine laws, except those written in your hearts by the finger of your creator. “*And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*” **Romans 8: 28 (NIV)**

Dear Fraters, I humbly thank you for the honor and privilege of serving you as Grand Commander for the ensuing Templar Year. I pledge to you that I will serve you with dignity and honor and do my best to be worthy of the trust you have reposed in me.

And now, *“may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”* **Romans 15: 13 (NIV)**

SYMPOSIUM

The Frederick A. Beitter Symposium will be held on January 25, 2025, at the Utica Masonic Temple, 251 Genesee St., Utica NY. In the event of inclement weather on that day, February 22, 2025, will be the back-up date. All Grand Line Officers, Zone Commanders, and Recorders are required to attend. All Council Officers of the Constituent Commanderies of the Grand Commandery of New York are encouraged to attend. All Sir Knights are welcome to attend, especially those interested in serving in these offices. There will be a general session, introduction of a new instructional video on the opening of the Commandery, and an instructional session on the conferral of all orders, especially the Order of the Temple.

Sir Knight David Barkstedt, REPGC, will also conduct MMS training for all Recorders on Monday, June 30, 2025, and Monday, September 8, 2025. Sir Knight Barkstedt will provide additional information and the Zoom links for these sessions.

INSPECTIONS

This year the Tactics, Sword Manual, and Ritual will be our focus as the number of Commanderies that are not proficient in this work is surprisingly high. The Inspecting Officers will be directed to assist the Commanderies in these functions. The work of the Recorder and Treasurer will also be reviewed carefully. Inspecting officers will be expected to present the Grand Commander's message, promote our charities and attendance at the Easter Sunrise Service, and address all concerns of the Constituent Commanderies.

The RITUAL REQUIREMENTS should be recited from memory and not read. The work this year will be:

ILLUSTRIOUS ORDER OF THE RED CROSS: Pg. 39, starting with “this sword, of which you were deprived by our guards,” and ending on page 40 with “having

faith in God, may reasonably Hope for victory, ever remembering to extend Charity to a fallen foe.”

KNIGHT OF MALTA: Pg. 73, starting with “My Brother, the request you make ...” and ending on Pg. 74 with “Faith, Hope, and Charity.”

ORDER OF THE TEMPLE: Pg. 123, starting with “Charity and hospitality are the grand characteristics of this Valiant and Magnanimous Order.” and ending with “and may the almighty, who is a strong tower to all who put their trust in him, be now and ever more thy defense and consolation.”

CHARITIES

These are not easy times for many of our Brothers and members of our communities. Too many are experiencing want and the need to seek assistance for themselves and their families. I *Hope* you will support your local food pantries and other giving opportunities that help these members of God’s family who are so acutely in need of our assistance.

I also *Hope* that all Sir Knights will continue to support our core charities consisting of the New York Division Education Foundation, the Holy Land Pilgrimage, St. Bernard's Priory Endowment Fund, and the Grand Encampment Eye Foundation.

The KTEF supports research in the field of pediatric eye disease and is making great strides in helping children improve and regain their eyesight. All Sir Knights are encouraged to support the KTEF by becoming a Life Sponsor by contributing \$30.00, and all Commanderies are encouraged to become 100% Life Sponsors.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership may be the most important and challenging aspect of this Templar year. To put this issue in perspective, membership in the Grand Commandery of New York as of April 2024 was 1300 Sir Knights. While I *Hope* our fraternal bonds are sufficient to draw us back into our asylums, I know we must make an earnest attempt to re-engage our long-standing members for the good of the Order. We must also make an earnest attempt to encourage good men to become Master Masons, Royal Arch Masons, and Sir Knights. Consider this, if every Sir Knight assisted with the creation of one Sir Knight to be his replacement, we could increase our membership statewide by 100% in just one year.

The inability to confer orders on a consistent and convenient schedule has impacted our ability to increase membership and will require significant effort to accommodate and welcome candidates into our Order. I *Hope* all Sir Knights will make a concerted effort to become proficient in the ritual of our orders. In this way we will be able to confer our orders on worthy candidates in our Commanderies and Zones as well as at the Pilgrimages routinely conducted in Zone 4 in March and in Zone 8 in November.

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICE

The 2025 Grand Encampment Easter Sunrise Service will be held at the George Washington National Memorial in Alexandria, VA, on Sunday April 20, 2025. This is a beautiful time to visit our nation’s capital and to experience this most impressive Easter worship service. The Grand Encampment Easter Sunrise Service may be attended by all Sir Knights and their families. I *Hope* you will all consider making this event part of your Easter experience. More information will be made available by the Grand Junior Warden, Sir Knight Richard Miori, as it becomes available.

ZONE SCHOOLS OF INSTRUCTION 2024-2025

Zone #1	February 8, 2025,	Matinecock Lodge, Oyster Bay, NY	Jordan
Zone #2	February 15, 2025,	Grand Lodge Bldg. NYC, NY	Jordan
Zone #3	November 7, 2024,	Masonic Hall, New Windsor, NY	Jordan
Zone #4	March 8, 2025,	Masonic Hall, Albany, NY	Jordan
Zone #5	October 10, 2024,	Norwich #46, Oxford, NY @7 :30pm	Wilkinson
Zone #6	October or November	Utica #3, Utica, NY	Wilkinson
Zone #7	October 24, 2024,	Malta #21, Vestal, NY @ 7:30pm	Wilkinson
Zone #8	October 12, 2024,	Sagoyewatha #17, Phelps, NY @ 9:00am	Wilkinson
Zone #9	October 8, 2024,	Lake Erie #20, Lackawanna, NY @ 7:30pm	Wilkinson

Times and dates for the Zone Schools may only be changed by the instructing officer with the approval of the Grand Commander.

Courteously and with Hope,

S.K. John W. Scott

Grand Commander

Grand Commandery State of New York

