

# Grand Encampment of Knights Templar



## THE APARTMENTS OF THE GRAND PRELATE

*and*

## THE RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Year of Our Lord 2024 to all valiant and magnanimous Knights of the Temple,  
wheresoever dispersed throughout Christendom

~

Salutations and Knightly Greetings:

### A TOAST TO OUR MOST EMINENT GRAND MASTER

#### CHRISTMAS 2024

Most Eminent Grand Master as we enter the season where it is righteous and good to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, we, your Sir Knights, gather and offer a toast to you in your honor.

In this Holiest of times, as we go outside and brave the cold, and the hustle and bustle of crowds to bring home that prized gift, a representation of the presents brought to our Savior by the wise men. Our hearts and minds turn towards the precious babe lying in a manger and we realize, even if only for a little while the world is a kinder, gentler place. It is only then that we remember the Angel saying to the shepherds "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:10-11 ESV

And so, as you travel with a servant's heart across this great country of ours, and to other parts outside its borders where Grand Commanderies reside under the jurisdiction and banner of the Grand Encampment we, your Sir Knights, ask our Lord in prayer that He would watch over you and keep you well protected and safe. And, on those rare occasions, when your Lady Kim travels with you, we ask those same blessing upon her, for we know what great comfort it is when your wife and companion is traveling with you.

And now it is with a shout of joy that we raise our glasses and say thank you, for we are well served.

A Prayer and toast to you Most Eminent Grand Master!

In Jesus' Holy Name,

The Reverend Sir Knight Paul D. Erickson, KGC, Chairman  
The Committee on Religious Activities  
The Reverend Sir Knight Robert J.F. Elsner, KGC  
The Reverend Sir Knight Terry L. Plemons, KGC



*The foregoing toast to the Most Eminent Grand Master and his response thereto are transmitted to you with the request that you extend an invitation through the proper offices to all Sir Knights within your jurisdiction to join in the sentiments thus conveyed at some convenient hour, on or near the birthday of Christ, commonly called Christmas Day, December twenty-fifth, in the Year of Grace 2024.*



## GRAND MASTER'S RESPONSE

### CHRISTMAS 2024

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

Greetings in the Name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

I tender to you all my profound thanks and appreciation for your recognition as a "Servant Leader" within our humble Order; filled with likeminded, and inspiring men.

As Knights Templar assemble this season for their annual Christmas Observance, paying homage to Emmanuel, and once again re-live the Christmas Story – let me encourage each of you to remember your vows of Christian Knighthood and rededicate yourselves to the love that manifests itself in the Word of GOD. May this season be one of joy and happiness for you and your family.

Let us, as true Soldiers of the Cross, strive to profit by the birth, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of that divine Master, and remain His faithful soldiers unto death. Seeking strength to continue that struggle let us now offer this prayer of grace.


#### PRAYER.

*ALMIGHTY and most merciful Father, remember us with pity, we beseech thee, and blot out the multitude of our transgressions, for thy beloved son's sake. And may the words of our mouths, and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in thy sight, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.*

*FATHER in heaven command thy blessing to rest upon all true Knights of the Temple wherever dispersed; bestow upon them a spirit of Truth, Justice, Courage, Constancy, Faith, and Humility, and make of them valiant defenders of thy holy religion. Teach them to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, and bind up the wounds of the afflicted, for Jesus' sake. Amen!*

The officers of the Grand Encampment and their families join with Lady Kim and me in wishing each of you and your families a Merry Christmas and a most fruitful New Year.

Courteously,



David J. Kussman, GCT

Grand Master

**General Order No. 2**  
**The Grand Commander's Christmas Message**

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

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS SIR KNIGHTS,

“May the glory of our Savior’s birth fill your heart with peace and love this Christmas.”

The very first Christmas focused on the little things. God did not arrive in this world with all fanfare and glory. Instead, He came as a baby. The story of the Savior’s birth contains additional little details such as the little Town of Bethlehem, the tiny stable, the small group of shepherds as witnesses, and the small but significant gifts of the Magi. The grandness of the Christmas story is enhanced by these small details.

I grew up in a family where my parents were able to give us wonderful Christmases. They were generous, and we usually received most of the presents we picked out of the Sears and Roebuck Wish Book. However, looking back I do not remember many of those gifts. My Christmas memories are of making Christmas cookies and other sweets to give as gifts, decorating the house and tree soon before Christmas so the magic was still there on the 25<sup>th</sup>, going to Christmas Eve service dressed in our best church clothes, and reading the Christmas story before bed. All these years later, the small things were the most significant.

To borrow a line from *A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens, I am asking you to show the world that we Sir Knights “know how to keep Christmas well.” Let us forego the excessive trappings of the season and devote the four weeks of Advent to reflect on our lives, turn daily from sin, and do the work to which God has called us. Let us plan simple, but meaningful Christmas Observances when we can

invite all to Come Home to a place where they will find warmth and support, joy and laughter, and the love of our Risen Lord. Let us also remember the importance of charity during this season of Joy and put something in the Salvation Army Red Kettle, buy gifts for Toys-For-Tots, and donate to your local food pantry. By eschewing the excesses of the season and pressing onward on behalf of the destitute and oppressed and in a Brother's cause, we can ensure that we all have fond memories of a blessed and bountiful Christmas.

May "God grant you the light of Christmas, which is faith; the warmth of Christmas, which is purity; the righteousness of Christmas, which is justice; the belief in Christmas, which is truth; and the all of Christmas, which is Christ".

My Lady Lynn and I wish you and yours a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Courteously and in His Service,

S.K. John W. Scott

Grand Commander

Grand Commandery State of New York

## “Hope is at the Heart of Christmas”

I would like to lead this message with two readings from Scripture: " 'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the Lord, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future.' " (*Jeremiah 29:11*) This verse is often quoted and used as a life verse. It can be a reminder that God is in control and has good plans for people, even in difficult times. "Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and you shall call his name Immanuel." (*Isaiah 7:14*). This verse points to the ultimate future and hope of the world in the child Emmanuel.

Christmas is just a few weeks away! And these few weeks, are going to go fast... too fast... and that is primarily the result of our fast pace of life. With full schedules and overloaded calendars, we tend to miss out on some of the most incredible blessings this season has to offer. And no, these are not blessings that are wrapped up and laid under the tree. The number one blessing we have received is the gift of Jesus Christ - there is no greater gift that this world could ever receive! Along with Emmanuel's arrival, Christ came to this earth, He brought the blessing of Hope. Peace, Joy and Love. Jesus IS our hope... Jesus IS our peace... Jesus IS our joy... and Jesus IS our love!

While I truly enjoy all that comes with Christmas every year, I pray that we do not miss the heart of this special season. Christmas is NOT just another annual holiday surrounded by cultural tradition. Christmas celebrates the day that God's light broke through in this dark world. To understand the kind of hope, Jesus brings, we need to look back at something that took place long before He was born.

God's people... were living in darkness... in HEAVY darkness. They were suffering, they were desperate... and they were looking for hope. They didn't need some form of wishful desire or dream... as I can only imagine they all dreamed of something better. What they needed... was a promise... a guarantee... something they could hold on to as they navigated the season they were in. It is no different from our lives today.

The hope of a dawning light through the birth of a child who would one day make all things right. The Jewish people in the Old Testament needed these words to remind them that God had not forgotten about them and so do we today.

Not only has God not forgotten about you... God sent the answer for you... God has a plan for you... God has given us a great light, who is Jesus, to break through your darkness! No matter the cause... The Light of Christ has the power to shine through that dark situation. Jesus is the hope you are looking for!

Christ came to this earth that we might have hope! Because the reality was... we could not break through the current darkness on our own. So here's the deal... the enemy wants to try to keep a lid on your hope today. He doesn't want you to know the hope that can be found in Jesus. I want us to see just how God's light breaks through the darkness and brings us hope. God sees you. God knows where you are and most importantly... He knows what you need.

Sir Knights, through Jesus, the light had come... bringing a new hope to this world that we never had before. And this name, Immanuel, tells us why it was a hope like we had never seen before – now God was with us - in the flesh.

My Lady and I wish you and yours a most Hope-Filled Christmas Season! Amen.

**SK & Rev. Charles M. Roberts, Grand Prelate**

