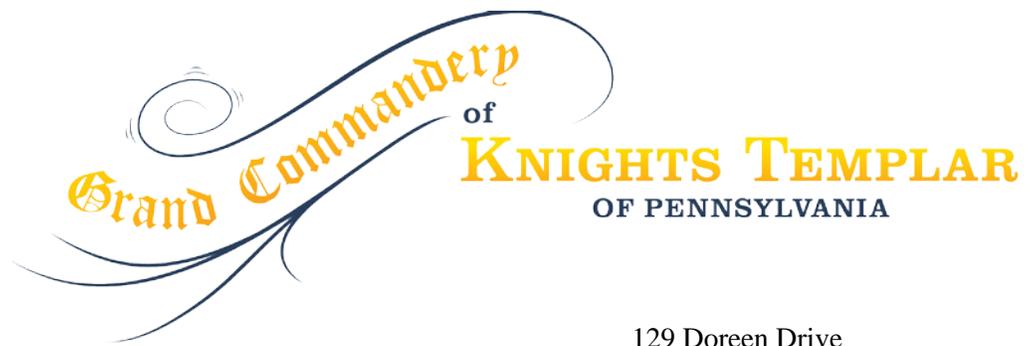




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From: the Desk of the Grand Commander, Response to Grand Prelate's Message

To: Rev. & Sir Knight Robert A. Witmyer, PDC, Eminent Grand Prelate

Sir Knight Witmyer and Lady Michele,

Grace and Peace be with you and your family during this wonderful season.

While I was pondering what this message should be, I thought of a somewhat different Christmas story, "How the Grinch Stole Christmas". I think most people have seen this children's story in its original form or maybe the later movie version, but the story is still the same. The Grinch, with his shrunken heart, discovers the true Spirit of Christmas and his heart grows with that Spirit to save him from existing in the dark.

I think it can become easy for many people to let their heart shrink, and pull back into the darkness in these modern times with all the hate and negativity in the world. We need to remember the good that is within all of us and that surrounds us even though it may be hard to see. It may just need a little spark to be lit. That light, that emanated out of the little manger in Bethlehem at our Saviors birth, enriches our lives and shows us the way to a brighter future for all mankind.

As it says in one of my favorite Christmas Carols, "Oh Holy Night", "The stars are brightly shining. It is the night of the dear Savior's birth!" That light continues to emanate around the world touching everyone that is ready to receive it into their heart with "A thrill of hope the weary soul rejoices. For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn!" Hope is the spark and every day should begin with a sense of that new and glorious morning.



That hope helps us all look forward to the day when “they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.” Isaiah 2:4

Until that time we will continue to spread the word of the Lord and do his will in our families and communities, sharing our values so that all people can use them as they see fit to make this a better world one heart at a time.

To all Sir Knights, Ladies, and your families, I hope you all have an enlightening and joyful Christmas. I hope you are able to find at least a little time to slow down during the holiday season to enjoy the family and friends around you. Please don't forget those who can't be with us for one reason or another. Be safe, have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

May the joy of the season be with all of us, and may the Lord's light shine down upon us.

SK Mark G. Mattern  
Grand Commander

