



Pennsylvania Crusader

GRAND COMMANDERY OF PENNSYLVANIA
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S.K. Mark G. Mattern, Grand Commander

Editor: SK Mark G. Mattern email: mgmattern@gmail.com



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Greetings Sir Knights,

December is upon us and we are now in the middle of the holiday season with all the commercialism and uncertainty in the world. If you were watching the stores for the Christmas decorations to be out you probably figured the season started back in September or October.

There are so many things to be thankful for at this time of year. I think the best thing we can remember is not to be thankful for getting everything we want, but for the opportunity to make someones day brighter by giving to them. Open you heart to the spirit of the season. The Grinch found out that his heart would grow three sizes that day. And then the true meaning of Christmas came though, and the Grinch found the strength of ten Grinches plus two.



Now I really like the story of **“Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Clause”**, but I found this story on Facebook and I thought it also shared this point on giving.

Son: "Dad, I think I'm old enough now. Is there a Santa Claus?."

Dad: "Ok, I agree that your old enough. But before I tell you, I have a question for you. You see, the “truth” is a dangerous gift. Once you know something, you can't unknow it. Once you know the truth about Santa Claus, you will never again understand and relate to him as you do now. So my question is: Are you sure you want to know?"

Brief pause...

Son: "Yes, I want to know"

Dad: "Ok, I'll tell you: Yes there is a Santa Claus"

Son: "Really?"

Dad: Yes, really, but he's not an old man with a beard in a red suit. That's just what we tell kids. You see, kids are too young to understand the true nature of Santa Claus, so we explain it to them in a way that they can understand. The truth about Santa Claus is that he's not a person at all; he's an idea. Think of all those presents Santa gave you over the years. I actually bought those myself. I watched you open them. And did it bother me that you didn't thank me? Of course not! In fact it gave me great pleasure. You see, Santa Claus is **THE IDEA OF GIVING FOR THE SAKE OF GIVING**, without thought of thanks or acknowledgement. When I saw that

woman collapse on the subway last week and called for help, I knew that she'd never know that it was me that summoned the ambulance. I was being Santa Claus when I did that."

Son: "Oh."

Dad: "So now that you know, you're part of it. You have to be Santa Claus too now. That means you can never tell a young kid the secret, and you have to help us select Santa presents for them, and most important, you have to look for opportunities to help people. Got it?"

Make sure to take time to enjoy this holiday season and make memories with those around you. Have a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year.

Yours in Templary,
Mark G. Mattern, REGC



A Letter from the Grand Prelate:

Sir Knights,

How many of you find yourself entirely engulfed by the activity of the holiday season and overwhelmed by its expectations? I am certainly one of those people and often find myself expressing a "Bah, humbug!" attitude about Christmas season, at least in its secular form.

What do we really want out of this Christmas season? What are we looking for? Why do we celebrate it? Let me share with you what I want this Christmas as I ponder its true meaning. I think Ann Weems says it best in her poem, "Kneeling in Bethlehem"

"What do I want for Christmas? To see in that stable the whole world kneeling in thanks for a promise kept: new life. For in his nativity, we find ours."

Sir Knights, what do you really want for Christmas? Do you want peace, love, and new life, or are you satisfied with the Christmas our society has given us? As for me I'm going to Kneel in Bethlehem maybe I'll see you there too.

Merry Christmas

God's Blessing,
Rev. and Sir Knight Robert A. Witmyer, GP

