



Pennsylvania Crusader

Since 1948

GRAND COMMANDERY OF PENNSYLVANIA
pagrandcommandery.org

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January 2023

A Happy and Prosperous New Year to My Fellow Fraters!

The month of January takes its name from the Roman god Janus. Janus had two faces; one looking back and the other looking forward so he could see the future and the past. The god Janus is also the protector of gates and doorways. Looking back on our accomplishments this Templar Year, we must ask ourselves--

- Have we been good Christian Knights and represented ourselves appropriately to our fellow Sir Knights as well as to the public?
- Have we both as individual Sir Knights and as a Commandery pursued Our Basic Tenets of feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and binding up the wounds of the afflicted?
- Are we recruiting new members into our Commandery and contacting those we haven't seen in some time to come back to the Asylum?

If we cannot answer any or all of these in the affirmative, then let us look ahead and make the commitments to follow through and meet our directives. There are so many opportunities to represent Templary in public; reach out and contact public and civic leaders & organizations. Find out what opportunities are out there for Knights Templar to assist in various events. Perform as an Honor Guard for a sporting event or memorial service. Assist local churches and food banks/pantries in various food and clothing drives. Speaking of which, if your Commandery has not already done so, now would be an excellent opportunity to start that food and/or clothing drive. Food banks are running out of supplies due to overwhelming demand. Clothing is always needed in men's and women's shelters—don't forget many times children accompany the women to these shelters. They need clothing too! Finally, our animal shelters are at the bursting point with surrenders and strays that have been rescued. At this point, the shelters are evaluating those animals that are very sick or determined to be terminally ill and the difficult decision is being made to euthanize them. Christmas puppies and kittens will grow up into dogs and cats. Suddenly the “cuteness” is gone and the pet becomes disposable.

Let us as Knights of the Christian Faith not dwell on the past but choose to look forward and do the good deeds. Let Knights Templar be the shining light in the darkness for all to see. When we all work together, great things are possible!

Courteously,
Sir Knight Harry Jude Smith, Right Eminent Grand Commander
Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Pennsylvania

Grand Prelate's Address

There is a book in the Bible that many of us are not familiar with near the back of the Old Testament. It is the book of Haggai. It is a whole two chapters long but it is quite significant especially as we begin this New year. Eighteen years after Cyrus's decree that the Jews could return home from exile to Jerusalem the people were busy building their own homes and they had not finished building God's Temple. Under the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua and with Haggai's prodding they began to rebuild the temple in 520 B.C. and finished it in 515 B.C.

We are much like the Israelites are we not? Human nature always seems to take over and we leave God's work and get so encompassed in our own. We forget that we are to brighten and lighten the world. We live for ourselves and as God says to the Israelites they never seem to have enough. He tells them to finish the Temple and they will be blessed more than they can imagine. They follow his instructions and they are blessed far beyond what they ever thought. Haggai asks them this question "How do you see it now?"

When we do God's work the light enters the darkness and our lives are changed. Let's make a resolution this year to get outside of ourselves and do God's bidding as we continue with Right Eminent Grand Commander & Brother Harry's challenge to "feed the hungry and clothe the naked and bind up the wounds of others."

When we do, we will be blessed far beyond our imagination and we can answer the question Haggai asks, "How do you see it now?"

Happy New Year and spend 5 minutes and open the Scriptures and read the Book of Haggai as you begin this New Year

Sir Knight and Reverend Preston A Van Dursen, Grand Prelate
Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Pennsylvania