



Pennsylvania Crusader

Since 1948

GRAND COMMANDERY OF PENNSYLVANIA
pagrandcommandery.org

S.K. Joshua J. Nay, Grand Commander

josh.nay@gmail.com

Editor: SK Mark G. Mattern, PGC email: grandrecgcktpa@gmail.com



September 2025

Sir Knights,

In the middle of the August heat, a one-day conferral of orders was held at the Rimrock Masonic Center in Stroudsburg. It was a day filled with well-performed ritual and provided excellent opportunities for fellowship amongst our fraters. At the end of the day, we welcomed 52 new Sir Knights into our Order. Congratulations to all our new members! I hope you all make a point to attend the conclaves of your new commandery and explore ways to get involved. I guarantee your new fraters will welcome you. Let me also share my heartfelt thanks to all who contributed in the planning and execution of such a great day. Events like these do not happen without the dedication and effort of many people, and I am very appreciative of everyone who made it happen.

With Labor Day behind us, it is time to return to our asylums and the work of our Order. As I requested in General Order No.1, continue to do good work in support of fellow Sir Knights, our Masonic family, and your communities. Consider new opportunities for service to others and engage your members in fulfilling the obligation we all took. And don't forget - Luceat Lux Vestra (Let Your Light Shine)! Take a photo and send it to me along with a caption so it can be included and shared in future issues of The Crusader.

Are you a Life Sponsor of the Knights Templar Eye Foundation? For a one-time \$30 donation, you can make a tremendous difference in the lives of children by helping the Foundation fulfill its mission. [Click here](#) to make your one-time gift and help change lives.

Thanks for all you do for Templary!

Mark Your Calendars

Sept 11, 2025 9/11 Memorial Service, Shanksville

Sept 11, 2025 Division 14 Joint Conclave, Danville

Sept 16, 2025 "Knighly Feast", Wellsboro

Sept 20, 2025 Division 11 Reception, Gettysburg

Sept 21, 2025 Memorial Service, Gettysburg

Sept 26-28, 2025 Annual Conclave of the Grand Commandery of New York, Albany, NY

Oct 4, 2025 Oriental Commandery 1st Annual Charity Harvest Ball, Johnstown

Oct 13, 2025 Division 8 Joint Conclave, Butler

Nov 7-9, 2025 Division Commanders' Seminar, Elizabethtown

Commandery Anniversaries in September

Mountain No. 10 – September 20, 1855

Baldwin II No. 22 – September 13, 1866

Packer No. 23 – September 26, 1866

Dieu Le Veut No. 45 – September 17, 1872

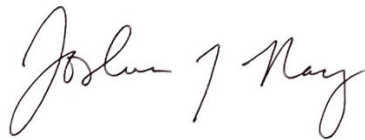
Trinity No. 58 – September 28, 1881

Potter No. 69 – September 24, 1890

Gettysburg No. 79 – Sept. 25, 1899

Savona No. 89 – September 26, 1913

Courteously,



SK Joshua J. Nay
Grand Commander



Associate Grand Prelate's Message

It is always interesting to get a glimpse into the world of the Bible. When we do, we realize very quickly that these were men and women were very much like us, but they lived in a culture quite different from our own.

For one thing, biblical people lived in a society that condoned the owning of slaves. Of course, the same thing could be said of our own society up until 160 years ago. And, as in our own nation, to be a runaway slave was a serious event. The first chapter of Philemon centers on one such slave, a man named "Useful."

That's what his name means—Useful. We know him as Onesimus. St. Paul is writing from prison, probably in Rome. Somehow, under Paul's influence, this runaway slave named Useful, or Onesimus, has become a follower of Christ.

It is clear that Paul has grown quite fond of Onesimus. But Paul has a dilemma. Legally Onesimus belongs to a man named Philemon. Ironically, Philemon is a good friend of Paul's in Colossae. And Philemon is a devout follower of Christ. A house church meets in his home.

So, here's Paul's dilemma: Should he send Onesimus back to Philemon as the law dictates? Runaway slaves could be put to death or at least suffer harsh punishment. Now, you may think this is no dilemma at all. Philemon is a Christian. Case closed. I wish it were that simple. It ought to be. Unfortunately, many Christians through the centuries have been able to rationalize owning slaves. It happened in our land. Many otherwise devout Christians in the South owned slaves and seemingly thought nothing of it. It's amazing how many terrible attitudes and actions can be rationalized in the name of religion. Besides, Philemon was part of a society that condoned owning slaves. If he acted kindly toward a runaway slave, how would he be treated by his friends who were probably also slave owners? The issue seems black and white to us, no pun intended, but it was not that black and white to the people of that time.

Even worse, it may be that Onesimus stole something from Philemon before he ran away. Philemon may have had many reasons for not feeling too kindly toward Onesimus. But Paul wants to do the right thing, and to give Philemon the opportunity to do the right thing as well. So, Paul sends Onesimus back to Philemon with a letter, this letter, the little book of Philemon. He asks Philemon to welcome Onesimus back not as a slave, but as a brother in Christ. Paul even makes a little play on words with regard to Onesimus' name. He says, "Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful both to you and to me." Again, his name meant "Useful." So, Paul is saying, "Once he was useless, but now he is Onesimus, useful."

Christ has done that for millions of people through the ages, hasn't he? Christ has changed them from useless to useful. And so, Paul asks Philemon to give Onesimus a second chance.

Christian faith is the faith of the second chance. You do understand that don't you? That is the heart of our theology. That is what the cross is all about. We were all-every one of us-useless at one time or another. But Christ gave his life to make us useful to God. You don't have to be a criminal, a prostitute, or a runaway slave to qualify for a second chance. Sometimes you can be wealthy, educated, cultured—while at the same time being prideful, snobbish, condescending—and qualify for a second chance. Second chances are why Christ came into the world. Second chances are at the heart of Christian faith. That's because of something called grace, amazing grace.

Sometimes the biggest obstacle to people receiving a second chance is the attitude of fellow Christians. Just because a person bears the name of Christ does not mean that he or she has the heart of Christ.

Fortunately, God doesn't label people except with one label, "Forgiven." Our faith is one of second chances, even if sometimes religious people can be the biggest obstacles to people seeking second chances.

Paul sent a letter by way of a runaway slave. He was asking Philemon to give this man named Useful another chance. Did he? I hope so, and if there is someone to whom we need to give a second chance, I pray that we will be strong enough as well.

Rev. & S.K. Orville R. Jones, GPE

One-Day Conferral of Orders on August 16, 2025, in Stroudsburg, PA.





S.K. Dave Barlieb, Jr., EGCG, presents a check for Ronald McDonald House to S.K. and M.E. Companion Eric C. Stahley, Most Excellent Grand High Priest, as a token of appreciation for his support of our one-day conferral in August.

(L to R) S.K. Wilmer E. Hall, REPGC, S.K. David C. Allison, PC, and S.K. James Swinton, Jr., PMEGC, at the Central Section Reception in Williamsport on August 23, 2025.





S.K. Brenden Hunter, DC14 (center), and S.K. Troy Mock, VEDGC (right), present a check for Give Kids the World to the REGC.

Central Section Reception in Williamsport on August 23, 2025.



Send photos of your commandery conclaves and events (along with a caption) to the REGC (josh.nay@gmail.com) for inclusion in future issues of the PA Crusader!