



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



December 2025

Sir Knights,

We are, once again, in the Christmas season, when our hearts are drawn to the wonder of God's greatest gift—Jesus Christ. As the Advent candles grow brighter each week, we are reminded that behind every carol, every light, and every act of celebration is a deeper truth: Christmas is about the Giver and His Gift. God did not give out of excess, but out of love. He offered His only Son so that we might receive forgiveness, peace, and eternal life, an unfailing gift that never fades and never loses its strength.

In a season filled with decorations and busy preparations, it is easy to overlook the quiet expressions of love that reflect God's heart: a sincere prayer, a shared meal, a thoughtful word, or a simple act of service. When offered with love, even the smallest gesture becomes meaningful. Remember - God gave us his Son, not wrapped in gold or silver, but in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger.

As joyful as this season can feel, remember that it is quite difficult for some due to grief, loneliness, financial stress, or other issues. Sir Knights, this Christmas season let us reach out to all those we can to offer companionship, share our blessings, and demonstrate Christ-like compassion in all we do. May we receive again the grace of God in Jesus Christ—and spread hope and kindness to all around us.

Mark Your Calendars

Dec 10, 2025 Division 4 Joint Conclave, Washington, PA

Dec 11, 2025 Joint Conclave of St. John's No. 8 and Lewistown No. 26, New Bloomfield

Dec 15, 2025 Joint Christmas Observance of Melita-Coeur De Lion No. 17 and Dieu Le Veut
No. 45, Wilkes-Barre

Dec 21, 2025 Pittsburgh No. 1 Christmas Observance

Dec 22, 2025 Joint Conclave of Huntingdon No. 65 and Constans No. 33

Dec 27, 2025 Grand Lodge Annual Grand Communication, Philadelphia, PA

Commandery Anniversaries in December

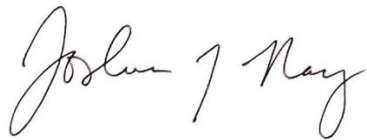
St. Omer's No. 7 – December 14, 1853

Pilgrim No. 11 – December 28, 1855

Northern No. 16 – December 4, 1857

Lady Kathy, Master Jack, and I wish you, your families and friends a wonderful Christmas filled with love, hope, and kindness.

Courteously,



SK Joshua J. Nay
Grand Commander



Grand Prelate's Message

How Do You Prepare for Christmas?

As the busy Christmas season begins, many Christians observe the traditions of Advent. Advent is a Latin word meaning “the coming.” It refers to the preparation time for celebrating the coming of Jesus, the Light in the midst of darkness, symbolized by the Advent wreath. Its observance begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas.

The Advent wreath is a circle of evergreen branches laid flat to symbolize God’s endless love for His people. Four candles stand in the circle – typically three purple and one white or pink – each symbolizing different meanings in different Christian traditions. Occasionally, blue candles are used to emphasize the hope in the fulfillment of God’s promise through the birth of Jesus.

One candle is lit on the first Sunday, two the second, three the third, and all four on the fourth and last Sunday before Christmas. A white candle positioned in the center of the wreath, called the “Christ Candle,” is typically lit on Christmas Eve or Christmas day.

The First Advent candle reminds us that the coming of Jesus brought light into a dark world. That light still shines in the darkness, but many have been blinded to its truth. We must make that light so bright this Advent season that even the most skeptical will be able to see it.

As we light the Second Advent candle, it reminds us that Christmas is for everyone. Remember the loneliness of Joseph and Mary as they searched for a place for the Christ child to be born. Are we sensitive to the needs of others who may also desire a place to be loved and accepted?

As we light the Third Advent candle, it reminds us of the great message delivered by the angels to the shepherds: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace”. The prophet declared, “For to us a child is born... and he will be called ... Prince of Peace”. Remember, we are expressions of that peace. Are we truly peacemakers? Speak peace. We must preach the peace our Lord preached.

As we light the Fourth Advent candle, we remember the greatest gift of all – the gift of God’s love. John wrote, “How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!” (I John 3:1). How do we respond to that love? There is no way to repay it, but there is a way to reflect it – to love your God with all your heart and to love His children, your brothers and sisters.

Gift-giving is a tradition that captures the imagination of us all, but on this Christmas, our Lord is most interested in how we show our love to Him ... and to our neighbors. Looking for a gift? “Love never fails.”

It is not always easy to love others. It is not always pleasant to work for peace. But what would it be like in our homes, neighborhood, lodges, even our country, if, as we interact with each other, we would all show God’s love to one another by extending forgiveness and peace?

“Live out your God-created identity. Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you” (Mathew 5:48). God did the most wonderful thing when he came to earth at Christmas. He came so that you and I and all people might have life, peace and joy. He thought only of you!!!

This Christmas as you go about giving, give the most precious gift to the ones you love, You, just as God gave himself to us in Christ that first Christmas. So why not take a few moments this Christmas and think about Him. After all, the real reason for the Season is all about God.

Have a very Blessed Merry Christmas!!

Joy and peace to you and to your families this Christmas.

God's Blessing,

SK. Rev. Robert A. Witmyer - Grand Prelate





Division 1 Christmas service, including Sir Knights from Kensington-Kadosh No. 54, St. John's No. 4, and Mary No. 36, at the church of S.K. and Rev. William Hartman, PGC, who gave an inspirational sermon about the birth of Jesus.



Sir Knights of Continental Commandery No. 56, stationed at Chambersburg, delivered the results of their annual drive to the Antietam Humane Society in Waynesboro, including \$850 in donations and much needed supplies.



A joint conclave of Continental Commandery No. 56 and Gettysburg No. 79 was held in Chambersburg. Many Sir Knights from Division 11 turned out to form the escort. During the conclave, Sir Knight Eric Holden, EC, and Sir Knight Michael Glenn, both of Continental No. 56, were presented with their Sword Proficiency Bar pins.



Sir Knights and families of St. John's Commandery No. 4, stationed in Philadelphia, at their annual Christmas Observance and party.



SK Troy A. Mock, VEDGC and Central Section Officer, made his official visit to Mt. Hermon Commandery in Sunbury.



Sir Knights of Nativity No. 71 and Mizpah No. 96 held a joint conclave and conferred the Order of the Red Cross on three new members. Congratulations to all on a great conferral!

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!