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To the Sir Knights of Texas:

Happy New Year! I hope that each of you had a wonderful Holiday filled with FAMILY, FUN, Food and Football! I'm pretty sure Becky watched at least some of every Bowl game that was on this season!

I also hope that among the list of resolutions you made for the upcoming year, attending your stated conclaves and called practices are at the top of the list. In order for your new officers to be successful and have a good year, they require the help of you – the membership. They need you to attend the conclaves and practices to help form the triangle and the lines. Most of all, they need you to attend the conclaves and practices to be on the sidelines, showing that you CARE about your Commandery.

I hope that each of you made a special resolution to bring in at least two new Sir Knights this year - one to replace yourself with and one for your Commandery to grow with. If each Sir Knight will do this, Texas will be the largest Grand Commandery in the world! Your Commandery will be receiving a letter from Sir Knight Hunter Schappaugh, Chairman of Membership, outlining some ideas to increase your membership. I hope that each of you will support the Membership Committee and their plans for 2012.

Of the many things you vowed to uphold when you were knighted, one was to defend the “Christian Religion”. I believe that one of the best ways to do this is to provide our ministers with the information and inspiration they need in order to “feed their sheep”. We do this through the Holy Land Pilgrimage and our Grand Commandery committee that works toward this program. This year, the Grand Commandery of Texas will send at least one minister to the Holy Land. Paris Commandery No. 9 is sending Reverend Chance M. Murphy of Union Baptist Church in Normangee on the February pilgrimage, and we are very excited for Reverend Murphy. I hope to have him speak at the Grand Commander’s banquet at the Grand Conclave in Houston. It would be wonderful if more ministers from Texas could go on these pilgrimages, however many Commanderies cannot afford to send a minister on their own. The average cost is approximately \$3,000.00 plus

airfare to New York. As of today, we have less than \$13,000.00 in the Grand Commandery’s Holy Land Pilgrimage fund. Sir Knights, your Commandery will be receiving a letter from Sir Knight Carl W. Wunsche, Chairman of the Holy Land Pilgrimage Committee, asking it for support. I am asking each of you to support the Holy Land Pilgrimage Fund by doing two things. First, use “Goodsearch.com”. Register your charity as The Grand Commandery of Texas, and then use this as your search engine. Every time you use “Goodsearch.com”, our Grand Commandery receives one cent. The Best Friends Animal Society received \$11,976.00 this year from supporters using “Goodsearch.com”, and I do not see why the Sir Knights of Texas cannot do the same. Second, make a special donation to the Holy Land Pilgrimage Fund. Ask your Commandery to use the love offering from a conclave to help with this project. Put out a “kitty” at your stated conclaves and see how fast the funds add up. Please send your donations to the Grand Recorder. The Holy Land Pilgrimage puts a face on Templary for the whole world to see. When we support the ongoing Christian education of our ministers and they take this message out to their congregations, we have truly carried the banner of Christ before us. Our CHIVALRY and CARING will be spread to more than just our FAMILY. My goal is to raise \$10,000.00 this year. A lofty goal, yes, but I believe one we can achieve! If your Commandery wishes to recommend a minister for a pilgrimage, please contact the committee. The funds raised by the Grand Commandery are available to assist any Commandery who desires to sponsor a minister.

Preparations are under way for the 159th Grand Conclave to be held April 20 – 23, 2012, in Houston. The registration forms have been mailed to your Recorder, and are also available on the website. All hotel reservations must be made through the Housing Committee. You can find a schedule of events on the website as well. I hope that your Commandery is practicing the Illustrious Order of the Red Cross and plans on bringing a ritual team this year. Please contact Sir Knight Doye Sudduth, Chairman, Templar Instruction Committee, should you have any questions. Sir Knight Greg Shively, Chairman, Field Drill Committee, will answer any questions you have regarding the Drill Schedule. I hope to see several new “D” teams and Ritual teams this year.

Sir Knights, I hope that this New Year brings you the FUN, CHIVALRY and CARING that only your Commandery FAMILY can give!

***In Christ’s Name,
Paul E. Wunsche,
Right Eminent Grand Commander***