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### +Greetings and Welcome +

**A New Beginning** –By the time you read this, a new year has begun, and your Commandery has already, or will soon be installing, a new corps of officers, beginning a new year of knightings, events, and fresh ideas of leadership for your Commandery to embrace. The beauty of our organization is that there are certain critical objectives we must accomplish, but the balance of the term is yours to try new ideas, set new goals, and do something different. Think ‘outside the box’... Be an innovator, not an imitator!

Are you going to be satisfied with reading about great things that someone else did at another Commandery, or will you choose to take an active role and be creative, making a positive impact, and not just a ‘thud’ upon your Commandery and Texas Templary?

Throughout the years, our organization has had in its ranks, those who truly made a positive difference; assets, not liabilities; leaders, not followers! Which path will you take? It’s a new year, a time to begin your ‘Path of Excellence’! Take command!

**161<sup>st</sup> Grand Conclave** – Put April 25-28, 2014 into your calendar and make plans to be at the Annual Grand Conclave of the Grand Commandery, which will take place in Houston, at the Marriott Westchase Hotel. All events will occur at the hotel, so once you arrive, you will not have to leave until it’s over; Also, we chose this hotel because of its convenient location, comfortable rooms and very good food. There will be several opportunities for you and your Commandery to participate, Drill Teams, Ritual Teams (Six-Man Teams this year), York Rite College meeting, KYCH meeting, Knights Preceptor meeting, Awards Banquet, Divine Service, Reception/Luncheon/GLoT San Jacinto Observance, Business session and the election of the new corps of Grand Officers! I hope you will join us in April, and take part in your Grand Commandery. Details for registration will be forthcoming next month, and will include some perks for you to stay at the headquarter hotel for all three nights, so watch carefully!

**Templar Field Day, Honoring Jacques DeMolay** – March 18, 2014, is a significant date for all Knight Templar’s; It is the 700<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the death of Jacques DeMolay, the last Grand Master of the ancient Templar’s, who gave up his life rather than betray his brethren and friends (a trait that we should all attempt to emulate). On Saturday, March 15, 2014, we will in gather Waco, Texas, to commemorate this anniversary, but conferring the Order of the Red Cross, Order of Malta, and the Order of the Temple; then, as a special treat, a specialized team of ritualist’s will confer some of the Templar Degrees of the Scottish Rite, in vignette form; ending the day with the DeMolay Initiatory Degree, the DeMolay Degree and Fourth Section. The idea is to show the close relationship that Templary shares with the Scottish Rite and DeMolay, and how we can work together for the betterment of Freemasonry. We also encourage you to **bring your York Rite candidates for this special conferral**, so they too, can see the Scottish Rite Degree vignettes, as well as the DeMolay Degrees, so they might see that they can join or participate with these other incredible Masonic organizations. The day will begin with registration at 8:00 am, at the Lee Lockwood Library and Museum, and the Order of the Red Cross will begin at 9:00 am. At some point, we will enjoy a catered lunch, there at the Museum’s banquet room. Put this date in your calendar and plan on being there with us!

**Never Give Up!** – Brother Alfred, Lord Tennyson once wrote a poem about an aging Ulysses, the King of Ithaca, who had returned home after decades of adventure, exploring and conquering ‘new lands’, but after a brief reprieve from his travels, spending calm and sedate time with his family, Ulysses realized that his true happiness was ‘in the field’, with the wind in his sails and the horizon as his destination... The point was, that even though we no longer have the stature or strength we once had, we should never give up our desire to explore and learn and grow! The following is the last stanza of Tennyson’s poem, which I urge you to read in its entirety:

*“...Tho' much is taken, much abides; and tho'  
We are not now that strength which in old days  
Moved earth and heaven, that which we are, we are,--  
One equal temper of heroic hearts,  
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will  
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.”*

**Moving Forward** – Though a new year has begun, the need for new membership has not ceased. As you plan your 2014, please include some type of Membership Program, as we all know, new members are the ‘life blood’ of our organization! Securing new members is a habit, once you get started, it’s much easier to maintain the inflow; unfortunately, the lack of pursuing new members is also a habit, a bad one! Stay vigilante in your quest for new Sir Knights.

**Easter Observance** – This year, Easter falls on Sunday, April 20, 2014, and there are three Grand Encampment Easter Observances in the U.S., In Alexandria, VA; Kansas City, MO; and Los Angeles, CA. If you have never attended one of these events, you have truly missed something special, particularly the one in Alexandria, VA. Besides all of the sights in nearby Washington, D.C., the Templar march up the hill, where the George Washington Masonic Memorial is located is something to behold, with all of the Templars marching in-step, in full uniform! And to watch as our Grand Master places a Templar wreath at the ‘Tomb of the Unknowns’, surrounded by the Sir Knights, in uniform, is very impressive! If possible, make plans to attend one of these special observances.

**Second Grand Commandery Footstone** – Following the successful Footstone Ceremony for Sir Knight Henry Bates Stoddard, Past Grand Master of the Grand Encampment, USA, which occurred at Ivanhoe Commandery #8 in November, a second Footstone Ceremony is being planned for Sir Knight John Temple Rice, Past Grand Master of the Grand Encampment, USA, sometime this Spring. I hope that you will make plans to attend, once the date has been set!

**A Toast!** – It’s not too late to place your order for the official Texas Grand Commandery Wine, “*The Fifth Libation*”, suitable for the Order of the Temple, the Order of the Red Cross Banquet setting or any Festive Board, or just to enjoy at home! Contact Roberto Sanchez, the Chairman of this special project (contact info is on the Grand Commandery website). The wine is not too sweet, and not too dry, but just right! Order your bottles today!

– Don’t be afraid of greatness, step up to the challenge and promote Templary... “*Let Your Light So Shine...*”

+ H. Bart Henderson + Grand Commander + 2013-2014 +  
*“Do right, and risk the consequences!” - Brother Sam Houston*