

Dock F. Dixon, Jr.

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To the Sir Knights of Texas:

I sincerely want to thank each of you for elevating me to the highest office in The Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Texas. This is a job with awesome responsibilities. I do humbly accept this high honor. I pledge to each of you that I will fulfill the duties of this high office to the best of my ability and that I will serve with truth and integrity, while governing with justice and moderation.

Permit me to digress for a few moments. I attended my first Grand Conclave in 1996 when R.E. Paul Warren was Grand Commander. I was impressed by the way each Grand Officer presented himself and by their conduct in each and every ceremony. M.E. Grand Master Blair Mayford was impressive and easy to approach concerning all aspects of Templary. My secret thought was, "I would like to do that." Four years passed, and in late 1999 I decided to offer my name as a candidate for Grand Sentinel in April 2000. I was awestruck and highly honored when you, the Sir Knights of Texas, elected me as your Grand Sentinel and gave me a chance to pursue the improbable. I want to thank the past Grand Commanders, especially the ones whom I have been honored to serve—starting with R.E. Jerry Kirby and ending with R.E. Bill Matyastik—for their service, advice, encouragement and friendship. I also honor the Grand Line Officers for whom I have a close affinity and from whom I seek friendship and advice on all pertinent matters concerning this Grand Commandery. Let me thank the Officers and Sir Knights of all the Commanderies of Texas for their warm and hospitable welcome during the Official Visitations of past years as I represented our Grand Commander. I hope you realize just how gracious you were *and are*, down to the last Sir Knight.

Attendance: I want to encourage all Sir Knights to regularly attend their conclaves and to support your officers in the discharge of their duties. Rare is the Commandery that has enough members present to fully form the lines for Opening of the Commandery or for the Order of the Temple. I feel certain that your regular attendance and assistance will better prepare your Commandery for its Official Visitation in September, October or November 2009, while you, at the same time, will be better for it, in part due to the renewed fellowship with and the support you receive from your fellow Christian Knights.

Membership: As of December 31, 2008, The Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Texas currently had 70 Commanderies, 5 of which are Commandery Outposts, with a total membership of 10,361. The Grand Lodge of Texas, on the other hand, had a membership of approximately 90,000 for the same period. As you can see, we have only 9% of the Brothers in our Texas Lodges as members of the Commandery. The fields are ripe for harvest, so let us get to work and gather this bounty unto ourselves.

I am pleased report, as well as welcome to the Grand Commandery Line as our newest member, our newly elected and installed Grand Sentinel, Sir Knight Richard Doss, a Past Commander of Vernon Commandery No. 33, now located in Quannah. I also want you to welcome our new Grand Prelate, whose Ascension Message was published in the May issue, Sir Knight J. Knox Duncan, a Past Commander of San Antonio Commandery No. 7 and also a recently retired Anglican Priest.

Finally, I am pleased that R.E. James N. Higdon PGC has agreed to be the Texas Page Editor for 2009-2010. His contact information is listed in the masthead. Send him anything you believe needs to be published to the Sir Knights of Texas. His deadline is the 25th of the month of the following month's issue.

In His Name,

Dock F. Dixon, Jr., Grand Commander

York Rite Festival announcement: Fort Worth Masonic Temple – Sept 11-12 – Chapter Degrees begin @ 6:45PM on 11th; Balance Degrees and Orders begin @ 7:00AM on 12th. Meals served one hour before start. Festival in honor of **R:E: William L. Blanks, PGC.** Contact Larry Whitfield, (682) 557-6166; lwhitfield123@att.net.