

Texas Grand Commander's Message

Grand Commander's Message - November 2004

Taken from the Texas Insert for the Knight Templar Magazine

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District Visitations in Nov/Dec (all times approx. 7PM unless noted): **NOV: 1 - Park Place; 5 - Litt S. Perry; 6 - Godfrey (9AM), San Angelo (9:30AM), Big Spring (6PM), Burnet, Worth; 11 - San Felipe de Austin; 13 - Southside & Jerusalem (9AM), Ivanhoe (2PM), Brenham, Cleburne; 18 - San Marcos; 19 - Arlington, Corpus Christi, Hillsboro; 20 - Colorado & Weatherford (9AM); Hidalgo (12N), Waco (6PM), DEC: 4 - Temple.**

York Rite Festivals: Denton: Chap/Coun/Cdry on **Sat, Nov. 20** (6AM Bkfast) - Contact Jason Pierce ((940) 391-3786). **Houston:** Chap/Coun/Cdry on **Sat., Dec. 11** (7 AM) at Holland Lodge Masonic Temple, 4911 Montrose - Contact Leonard O. Pierce ((713) 468-6116) or Tom Snedecor ((281) 333-3992). **Courtesy candidates welcome.**

Order of High Priesthood/Order of Silver Trowel Conferrals: Waco (Grand Lodge): **Dec 6** (7:00/8:30 PM).

Sesquicentennial Celebration in San Antonio on March 5, 2005. Check the website for specific information about this significant Grand Commandery event.

To the Sir Knights of Texas:

Our Grand Prelate has prepared a **Thanksgiving Message** for our consideration and edification as follows:

Webster's dictionary gives us clear and concise meaning to the word and leaves no doubt as to our thoughts and actions: Thanksgiving (n) 1: the act of giving thanks; 2: a prayer expressing gratitude; 3: a public acknowledgment or celebration of divine goodness.

Most of us remember the "Saturday Evening Post" magazine that featured that famous illustration on the front cover by Norman Rockwell. Practically every November we saw the typical family of that day. Mom and Dad, and the children seated around the family dining room table, ready for Dad to carve the traditional thanksgiving turkey.

Rockwell's classic work reminds me of the story of the little girl asked to say the grace before the meal. She and the others bow their heads and prepare for the blessing. The little Girl begins with the familiar words, Thank you Jesus for this day, thank you for the turkey, thank you for the potatoes, thank you for the dressing," and then, she pauses, turns to her Mom, and asks, "If I don't ask Jesus to bless the spinach, will it be ok?"

Well, I have no idea what sage advice Mom gave to her daughter, but I do know the daughter was in a relationship with Jesus. I believe she knew, more than the adults, that her Lord was listening. And that, my friends, is the real message of Thanksgiving.

Since the first colonists stepped onto these shores to begin their lives in a new nation, under

God, we have thanked God each November for all our blessings. In reality, we should be thanking Him every day every hour, and every minute of our lives. God gives his grace from our entry into this world until we leave it, and, thereafter, with him in His Kingdom. He gives us grace freely and continually, whether we ask or not.

Since our Grand Conclave in April 2004, it seems to me that we cannot escape the powerful events and influences around us. Our world is constantly changing. We are in desperate times. We are inundated by the daily barrage of information on television, radio, and the newspapers. Terrorism, war, the economy, unemployment, poverty, and scandals are constantly with us. I feel sure each of us has come to a clearer understanding of just how fortunate we are.

This Thanksgiving let us give thanks for the more intangible aspects of life. We must hold very dear the blessings God has given us, those near to us and those far away.

God's constant presence is a source of comfort and assurance. For that alone, we should be deeply grateful. Consider that we are created in his image and that he loves us unconditionally. To me, that is the primary reason for being thankful at all times, not the only this season of thanksgiving but throughout the year. We are among the most blessed people on earth.

James E. Sonneborn
Eminent Grand Prelate

What follows are my comments for this issue. As I mentioned in last month's message to you, I have prostate cancer, have had a second opinion on that and my options, and have decided to have a radical prostatectomy on December 14 using the Christmas Holidays to recuperate. I am told that I will be on restricted duty for three weeks and can then begin working partial days, working up to full days over the next three weeks before being substantially back to full speed. While I am at home and recuperating, Barbara will need your prayers as she puts up with me! On a serious note, however, I have certainly appreciated the many emails and cards that I have already received with your promise to pray for me during this new hurdle to successfully jump in my life's race. With that, I am certain that the outcome will be favorable, but, in any event, in God's Will.

Knights and Membership

We are making some great progress throughout the State in membership. Thanks to all of the Sir Knights who are working so hard in bringing in petitions and increasing our knightings. So far I am aware of at least the following knightings (approx.) at these Festivals: Houston - 10; Lubbock - 10; San Antonio - 11; McKinney - 10; Waco - 14 (4 others ready for O/T in Temple); and Austin - 4+. At each of these Festivals there were new SKs for other than the host Commandery. I hope that you Recorders are timely submitting the knightings to Grand Encampment on your Monthly Membership Reports so our membership numbers will be accurate and the new SKs will begin receiving the KT Magazine to which they are now entitled.

One last request as we go into Thanksgiving, don't let our current members go NPD. Work on having a Zero Tolerance for NPDs and try to regain some of those who have been lost to that category in the past. They are already SKs, so they should be an easier sell on being reinstated than the effort in gaining a brand new SK. Thank you in advance for your hard work.

OUR UTMOST FOR HIS HIGHEST,

James N. (Jim) Higdon
Grand Commander

P.S. Please contact me this year at one of the following: 10122 N. Manton Lane, San Antonio, Texas 78213-1948; O: (210) 349-9933; H: (210) 344-4309; F: (210) 349-9988; Email: jnh.kt@hhzlaw.com. **Check out your website at** www.texasorkrite.org/grcommandery.

P.P.S. Only a very few Templar dress ties are left. See the Knight Voices "ad." JNH