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### +Greetings and Welcome +

**Castle Event Review** – If you were not able to attend the DeMolay Degrees and the Order of the Temple at the Castle, in Burnet, Texas, you really missed a very special event! The castle itself, was bigger and more impressive than I had ever imagined. While sitting in the East, during the Order of the Temple, I caught myself in another time, in another place, trying to imagine what it was like during the Middle Ages, living and working in a castle, experiencing the regality of it all... the tall ceilings, the massive rooms and the thought that what we were doing really made a difference! And what made it extraordinary was the Sir Knights and Ladies of Burnet Commandery, who rolled out the ‘Red Carpet’ for us and treated everyone better than we deserved.... Thanks to all that worked so hard to make this event a success! I am pleased to say that there is an effort to make this an annual event and I hope you will be there next time to enjoy it.

**700<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Commemoration** – 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. There will be details to come... Put this date in your calendar and plan on being there with us!

**“...WINE is the greatest...”** – During the Immemorial Discussion, in the Order of the Red Cross, the Prince Chancellor takes the stance that “...Wine is the greatest...”; I remind you of this, to tell that the Official Grand Commandery Wine will soon be ready for shipment; It is suitable to use for the Order of the Temple, as well as at your dinner table! It will be bottled in half bottles, in order to deplete them quicker, keeping the wine as fresh as possible after opening the bottle. The Order Form and Shipping information will be placed on the Grand Commandery website soon, so prepare your palate for something wonderful!

**Our Finest Hour** – Each time we participate with something that is different, or new, that makes a significant impact, we believe that it is ‘our finest hour’, but I will share this with you, over the last ten years, I can say that I have witnessed several ‘finest hours’ while visiting all of the Commanderies in Texas; Seeing the Officers and Sir Knights making a positive impact upon their candidates, with great ritual and courtesy; Watching Sir Knights and Ladies of the Beauceant work together preparing meals and events for their respective meetings and occasions; Listening to new Sir Knights explain what the Order of the Temple meant to them following the conferral; Watching the presentation of a Templar Scholarship and listening to the student tell what they are studying and how they will spend the money we had just presented them; Watching the slideshows and listening to the Priests, Pastors, and Preachers tell, with excitement about their recent trip to the Holy Land, sponsored by the Knights Templar... I believe, as a Knight Templar, each day has a ‘finest hour’, we only need to watch and listen for them! **Be proud to be a Templar and ask a fellow Lodge member to join us in our ‘finest hours’!**

**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; I hope you will join us in April, and take part in your Grand Commandery. Details for registration will be forthcoming very soon, and will include some perks for you to stay at the headquarter hotel for all three nights, so watch carefully!

**The Blessings of Christmas** – As you read this, we are getting very close to the yearly celebration of the birth of Jesus. For all of us, this is a special time of year for many reasons... Typically, our families come together to enjoy the holiday, to worship in our churches together, to share our love for each other and for Christ. I hope that you will have the opportunity to share this time with your family! One of my favorite stories is written by William Sydney Porter, better known by his pen name ‘O. Henry’; It is called **“The Gift of The Maji”** and it is a Christmas story about a couples true love for each other and their willingness to make major sacrifices in their lives to make the other happy! God gave us his Son, for our happiness and we owe our lives to share His love with others, that they may know the story of true love for all mankind.

As Knights Templar, I would ask you to share some of your time and love this Christmas season, with someone you don’t know, someone who might not have some of the luxuries of life that we sometimes take for granted... It might be serving a lunch or dinner at a holiday feast for the under-privileged; Or working at your churches Food Pantry; or delivery lunches or dinners for Meals-on-Wheels; Or spending time working for the Salvation Army as a ‘Bell Ringer’; Or any other act of service for a stranger... One of the smallest parts in the Order of the Temple is that of a Hermit, and my favorite Hermits part is the second Hermits reading **“Let Brotherly continue. Do Not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares....”** I believe that we encounter angels in our lives, totally unaware of their impact upon us until long after our interaction. This may be your chance to have that type of positive impact upon another, **“Let your Light so shine before men, that they may see your good work, and glorify your Father, which is in Heaven.”**

– Don’t be afraid of greatness, step up to the challenge and promote Templary!

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