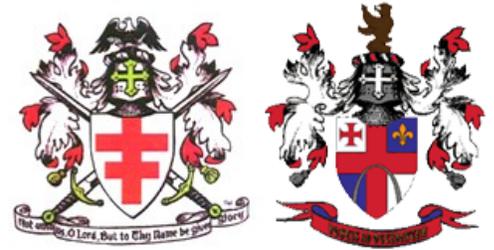


precept

A bulletin from the Preceptory of St. Mary the Virgin



Volume 1, Issue 1, April 2015



It's not too late to [Register](#) for the 2015 Grand Convent & Investiture in Boston, Mass. May 20-24 hosted by the Priory of St. David of Wales in New England.

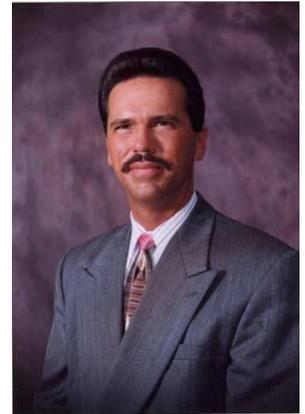
The Grand C&I isn't just for Priory Officers. Although specific informational sessions (known as Roundtable Sessions) are planned for Priors, Chancellors, Inspectors, Secretaries, Treasurers, Registrar, Masters of Postulants, Aumoniers, and Chaplains, there are plenty of informational and social events for all:

- Wednesday evening no-host libations and superb dining at the Top of the Hub in the Prudential Center
- Thursday evening at the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company Museum and a three-course meal at the famous Union Oyster House
- Friday welcome and opening session – Grand Prior's Reception
- Saturday Grand Council Meeting (all Knights, Dames and Postulants are welcome), C&I, and Grand Banquet
- Sunday Ecumenical Templar Worship Service

Brother Knights and Sister Dames;

It was nice meeting some of you at the Priory Convent & Investiture in St. Charles, April 17-18; I am honored to have been chosen by H.E. Chev. Ian Good, KCTJ to serve as your Preceptor for the coming term. For those I have not met, let me introduce myself.

My name is Pete Heineman. I've been a Templar since 2002; I was invested at the Grand C&I at West Point. I transferred from the Priory of St. James of Jerusalem in Central PA in 2014 when it became apparent the Priory was collapsing. I served in multiple roles within St. James—Inspector, Registrar, Webmaster, Pipe Major, Secretary, Armorer, and Interim Chancellor—frequently at the same time. I have attended all but two of the Grand C&Is since my investiture and can attest to the value of attending.



Like many of you, the Templars is not the only Order, Royal Confraternity, Nobiliary Fraternity, etc. I belong to. It is, however, the most active and therefore the one I support and promote the most. Through the Templars I have met some wonderful individuals who are committed to promoting the time-tested chivalric ideals of honor, honesty, civility, tolerance, care for our fellow man, and support for ecumenical religious faith.

It is His Excellency's wish and mine to revitalize the Templar presence in the Kansas City area. If you share that vision, I invite you to watch your email for further bulletins and notice of a Preceptory meeting coming soon to Kansas City.

This is a joint venture. My commitment to you is to stay in regular contact through this and other means, help provide structure and guidance, foster respect and appreciation, and promote the goals of our Grand Priory, Priory, and Preceptory.

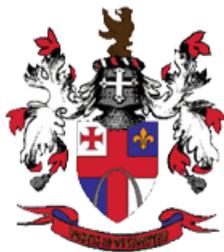
For those attending the Grand C&I in Boston, I will see you there.

Fraternally Yours,

Non nobis Domine
[Dr., Chev., Peter L. Heineman, GOTJ](#)
Preceptor



The Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem®
Autonomous Grand Priory of the United States of America
Priory of St. Louis the Crusader



2015-2017 Priory Officers

The Sovereign Military Order of The Temple of Jerusalem in the United States is a voluntary organization. It requires the sincere commitment of all its Knights and Dames to coordinate their efforts in an organized way, to accomplish the charitable goals of the Order.

Each Priory has responsibilities to the Grand Priory, to its members and to all members of the Order. Grand Priory goals and objectives are supported by the Priories. The roles and responsibilities of the Priory Officers can be found in APPENDIX C of the Standard Organization Manual of the Order.

The Prior is elected by the Priory Council subject to the approval of the Grand Prior. The Chancellor is appointed by the local Prior. All other Officers of the Priory are elected by the Knights and Dames in the Priory in odd-numbered years. Election is by majority of those voting in person or by proxy.

Our Priory Officers for 2015 through 2017 are:

Prior — H.E. Chev. Ian C. Good, KCTJ	314-954-5803
Chancellor — Chvse. Marilyn Geery, DCTJ	636-916-4702
Inspector — Chev. Steve Mastin, KCTJ	314-265-3171
Treasurer — Chvse. Lisa DeClue, DTJ	636-233-1125
Secretary — Chvse. Linda Carr, DCTJ	636-441-7796
Registrar — Chev. Steve Baldwin, GOTJ	314-304-5845
Aumonier — Chvse. Valerie Huwe, DTJ	314-324-5610
Armorer — Chev. Larry Carr, KCTJ	636-441-7796
Avocat — Chev. Ed Choate, Esq., KTJ	417-836-6616
Chaplain — Dr., Chev. Kendall Brune, KCTJ	314-767-0131
Chief of Protocol — Chev. Jeff Cook, KCTJ	618-257-1940
Knight Protector — Chev. William Radman, KTJ	314-846-5810
Master of Postulants — Chev. Dave Scott, KTJ	618-692-0736
Marshall — Chev. David Rodrigez, KTJ	636-332-2342

Quick Links



smotj.org

OSMTH



Recruitment Challenge

In his address to the Priory at the April 2015 C&I, LTC, Chev. Joel Warren, GOTJ, Grand Treasurer cited the importance of recruiting quality postulants with a diversity of skills as a top priority of GPUSA; followed by retention and continuity of leadership (succession planning). They are the same priorities for the Priory.

The principal focus in selecting and approving members has always been on “quality, not quantity.” Character is a primary consideration, as all members should bring honor, dignity, and respect to the Order by virtue of their own behavior and deportment. Membership experience in other organizations is helpful as is demonstrated accomplishments in life. Obvious commitment to major charitable, professional, governmental, military, or societal endeavors is a highly desirable indicator that an individual will become an asset to the Order.

CHRISTIAN—adhering to, and practicing Christianity.



CHARITABLE—practices charity; the voluntary giving of help to those in need, as a humanitarian act.

CHIVALRIC—exhibits the characteristics of knighthood

Like the Knights Templar of old, we operate as a modern-day worldwide network of educated professionals in such widely diverse protocols as senior government officials, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, senior clergy, military officers, physicians and surgeons, engineers, historians, and humanitarian aid caregivers.; these are ideal candidates for membership.

The Priory of St. Louis has a two-month recruitment program—currently April through June—to encourage all Knights and Dames to recruit quality applicants. A miniature medal (shown at the top) is presented to members sponsoring five or more candidates. But again, the emphasis is not on quantity, but on quality.

A variety of recruitment materials are available for the asking; sample cover letter, invitation, informational fliers, history, etc.

Email me or any of the Priory Officers for assistance.

precept

A bulletin from the Preceptory of St. Mary the Virgin



Volume 1, Issue 2, June 2015



Walk in the footsteps of Jesus, visit Bethlehem, stand at the sea of Galilee, follow the Via Dolorosa...

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Jordan

November 30th—December 11, 2015

Join brother Knights and sister Dames in the trip of a lifetime and meet some of the people our Order supports. The itinerary includes:

- A trip to Ramallah in the West Bank to visit with the Anglican—Episcopal Technical Vocational Training Center supported by SMOTJ
- Ascend the Mount of Olives and visit the Church of Pater Noster, walk the Palm Sunday Road
- Visit the Church of the Nativity and tour the Grotto of St. Jerome, The Church of St. Catherine, and the Shepherd's Field
- Enter the old city of Jerusalem, visit the Church of St. Anne, the Pool of Bethesda, the Chapel of Flagellation, Lithostrotos, and the Arch of Ecce Homo.

And that's just the first five days. Reservations and deposit due 65 days prior to departure. For further information, download the brochure:

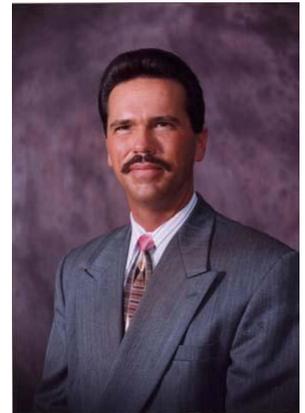
[Pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Jordan](#)

Brother Knights and Sister Dames;

Having recently returned from the Grand C&I in Boston, I am invigorated and humbled by the work our Fellow Knights and Dames are accomplishing throughout the United States and World.

Congratulations to Deputy Grand Prior SGM Chev. Thomas Marshall on his promotion to Grand Croix; it is a well-deserved recognition.

Every Templar should experience a Grand C&I at least once in their tenure. I fondly remember the 2009 Grand C&I in St. Louis hosted by the Priory of St. Louis on their 10th anniversary. As I am certain those involved will attest, hosting a Grand C&I is an ambitious undertaking that takes the commitment and involvement of all members.



As Knights and Dames we are all committed to The Order's values and precepts:

- Christian Ethos, Spirituality and Chivalric Values.
- Domestic Charity and International Humanitarian Aid
- Human Rights and the Respect for Human Diversity
- Interfaith Dialogue and Bridge-Building

Some are able to commit more time and resources than others, but all are involved in some way in the betterment of humanity through education, world brotherhood, chivalric principles, civil behavior and treatment among one-another.

I have the honor to be,

Fraternally Yours,
Non nobis Domine

[Dr., Chev., Peter L. Heineman, GOTJ](#)
Preceptor



The Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem®
Autonomous Grand Priory of the United States of America
Priory of St. Louis the Crusader

Prior's Perspective



As Dr. Heineman communicated in your previous April Bulletin, I was bestowed the honor of being elected as the Prior of St. Louis the Crusader. The opportunity to serve God, you, our Order, and our community is a privilege that I am extremely grateful for. I have had great partners and mentors that have helped guide me to where I am today. Armed with the confidence you have in me and your Leaders, along with your continued collaboration, we will see some fantastic accomplishments in our Priory.

As we begin our journey together, let me begin with introducing myself to those of you who may not know much about me. My name is Ian Good and I reside in O'Fallon, Missouri, with my wife Valerie and our 5 children; age ranges from 6 years old to 14 years old. I have been a Templar with the Priory of St. Louis the Crusader for the last 5+ years. Within the Order and other non-profit organizations that I am involved with, I have had the opportunity to serve in a multitude of leadership roles. In my career, I have worked for Citibank for the last 18 years as a Manager. It is my hope that this experience will aid me in being a positive leader for our Priory.

There is a lot to be excited about, and things to be on the look-out for. Your Preceptor, Dr. Chev. Peter Heineman, GOTJ, your Priory Officers (including myself), have some great ideas for the coming months and years to help revitalize, and engage the members within the region. We have begun to see the positive momentum that Dr. Heineman has created, and look forward to what amazing plans he has for the Preceptory and Priory for the future. His skills and expertise in leadership, organization, and charitable endeavors (just to name a few) are positive ingredients that St. Mary's will thrive from.

Much like your Preceptor, my personal commitment to you is to be a conduit of God's grace and acknowledge his presence in all we seek to do; to be present and always visible, stay in regular communication, provide guidance and consistency, seek out opportunities and ideas that encourage involvement and growth, promote the goals of our Order, and be an example that you will be proud of.

Every structure, or building grows from a solid foundation. My faith has provided me with the base and core that I have turned too regularly to help lead me through life. Prayer as my center from which I draw from, I will continue to Pray earnestly for, and with you as we build St. Mary's together.

I look forward to serving our Communities together, and meeting all of you at the upcoming Preceptory meeting June 28th.

Your Servant in Christ,

Non nobis Domine

† Chev. Ian Good, KCTJ

For as long as I have been a member of The Order, recruitment and retention have been a priority and a concern. Like so many volunteer organizations, SMOTJ is challenged with attracting viable candidates who have the commitment and resolve to be active in the Priory and community, and keeping them so.

There are a number of recruiting materials available for your use which I can send to you electronically or in a recruitment packet, including:

- **Letterhead** – the banner was designed by the Grand Herald, Chev. Russ Copping
- **Sample invitation letter** – it is just that...a sample. The content needs to sound like it comes from you
- **2015-17 Priory Officers** – current listing of Priory Executive Committee and their contact information
- **2014-16 GPUSA Officers** – current listing of GPUSA Executive Committee and Extended Committee
- **Membership invitation** – formatted to print four (4) cards per page; similar to invitations of other Orders
- **Who We Are and What We Do** – one-page information sheet
- **Priory of St. Louis Postulant Information Form** – in both Word and PDF formats
- **GPUSA Membership Application** – current GPUSA form for general membership

The challenge of retention begins with recruitment. In most organizations, recruitment and retention are addressed separately; but the two are related.

In recruiting potential members, you will come across a wide range of people who are different in terms of their psyche, their attitudes, beliefs and all other factors. It becomes difficult to judge what motivates whom. Incentives may motivate a certain person but may be equally unimportant to some other.

There is no universal solution, but talent management strategies may have an answer; look at the holistic picture - deal with whatever you have. We therefore have certain recruiting factors to address that impact retention.

- **Past experience or average tenure with other organizations**— Ones past experience can offer deep insights into the stability of the individual; what other organizations do they belong to? For how long? In what capacity?
- **Induction and orientation**—First impressions make lasting impacts. Try to create a kind of culture that looks challenging, inviting, friendly, supportive, and rewarding.
- **Role of sponsor after induction**—Keep in touch with the Postulants you put forward. Offer mentorship and guidance throughout their membership.



They call them a Grand C&I for a reason...

As those who attended the 53rd Annual GPUSA Convent and Investiture in Boston this past weekend will attest, it was GRAND. The following are my notes from the Grand Council meeting, convent and investiture, and Grand Banquet. They are not official, but it should give you an idea of what was addressed. My apologies in advance for the length of this report and if I have misrepresented any report.

Following the **Call to Order**, the **Invocation** was given by Grand Chaplain Schneider who stated that the fastest growing Christian population is not in America or Europe, but in Africa where they begin by saying, “*God is good*” with the response “*all the time*” and “*all the time*”, with the response “*God is good.*”

A **Determination of Quorum** indicated 250 Knights and Dames had registered for the event, and 99 were present; meeting the quorum. In her absence, a **Message from the Royal Patron** was shared at the Convent and Investiture.

The **Minutes from the 2014 Grand Council** were accepted with annotation and the Prior of St David of Wales of New England offered his **Welcome and Administrative Remarks** and **Briefing on Convent Procession and Seating**.

H.E. Buren Shields presented his **Report of the Grand Prior** which included a detailed description of the challenges with the previous auditing firm that resulted in the consummation of 85-90% of the Ex. Com’s time and efforts. In short, two(?) years ago, the Gatlin firm as hired to audit the administrative and PAP (Postulants, Awards, and Promotions) processes after an extensive RFP and interview process. The contract with Gatlin was terminated in 2014 for their failing to meet the terms of agreement, and Stone-Carlie was hired to cover the administrative functions. Dame Chatalaine has greed to administer the PAP program. The handoff was not clean; Gatlin records were incomplete, documents were not submitted, and errors were found in their reporting. The previous issues with reporting oblations and Jerusalem Mite donations have been cleared up but the decrease in oblations paid last year and the additional administrative expenses will result in a negative deficit year.

GPUSA Donations	2013	2014
Jerusalem Mite	\$139,000	\$122,500
Scholarships	\$ 75,666	\$83,444
Total GPUSA	\$214,663	\$215,484
Local Pories	\$223,555	\$165,286
Total Charitable Donations	\$438,218	\$380,770
Priory Donations	2013	2014
Direct Donations	\$195,610	\$137,252
In-kind Donations	\$ 27,945	\$ 28,034
TOTAL (from above)	\$223,555	\$165,286
Oblations Paid	1,352	1,111



The **Grand Master Report** from Patrick Rea focused on four (4) items.

- 1) There are 21 Grand Pories of which GPUSA is the largest, “*Without GPUSA, OSMTH would not exist.*” OSMTH is serving in an advocacy role with the United Nations in the Islamic State crisis through financial support and as a platform for churches and other NGOs.
- 2) Russia asked SMOTJ to support a UN resolution making the persecution of Christians an international violation of human rights; SMOTJ supports the resolution.
- 3) The King of Jordan—Abdullah II ibn al-Hussein —is a strong supporter of OSMTH.
- 4) The Sufi Shaikh charged with protecting oil sites is battling ISIS to protect Christians; armed by Russia, backed by King Abdullah, with support from OSMTH.

While a new video was playing in the background ([click here](#)), Grand Commander dePicciotto provided a brief **Report of the Grand Commander** reiterating many of the comments of the Grand Master.

Patrick Carney noted in his **Report of the Grand Chancellor** that 2014 reminders were sent in November, December, and January for late oblations and that the 2015 oblation notices would be coming out in June/July.

The **Report of the Grand Inspector** noted that Pories donated \$165,000 (different figure than reported by the Grand Prior) in Direct Contributions and over 30,000 volunteer hours to more than 200 local charities. St. Louis the Crusader was identified as one of the eight largest Pories in GPUSA with 66 members. 15 of the total 31 Pories gained members, 14 lost members.

The **Financial State of GPUSA** was presented by the Grand Treasurer who noted that—while not final—the projected operating income is anticipated to be \$7K with a projected 2015 budget deficit of \$20K.

The **Report of the Grand Aumonier** by Rev. Henson detailed a number of contributions made on behalf of GPUSA for Christians in the Holy Land to Anglican, Catholic, Lutheran, Russian Orthodox, and non-denomination churches and their activities totaling more than \$1.5M. Twenty-four students funded by GPUSA scholarships went on to college or employment in 2014. A proposed budget of \$120 in Jerusalem Mite disbursements for 2015 and an additional \$6,900 discretionary funds for the Prior to award while in the Holy Land was presented and approved by the Membership.

Secretary Goulka noted in her **Report of the Grand Secretary** that changes were made to the *Manual of the Order* to reflect the removal of Gatlin as the auditor. Additional/minor changes are anticipated in the forms.

The **Report of the Grand Archivist** by Scott Simon emphasized the need to keep accurate Priory and Grand Priory records and history. “*GPUSA archives are accurate from 1962 to the present.*” Grand Archivist Report continued on page 4.



Chinon Parchment

An exact copy of the Chinon Parchment was available for viewing at the Grand C&I. The Chinon Parchment is a historical document discovered in September, 2001, by Barbara Frale, an Italian paleographer at the Vatican Archives. On the basis of the Parchment, in 1308, Pope Clement V absolved the last Grand Master, Jacques de Molay, and the rest of the leadership of the Knights Templar from charges brought against them by the Medieval Inquisition. The Parchment is dated August 17–20, 1308, at Chinon, France, and was written by Bérenger Fredoli, Etienne de Suisy and Landolfo Brancacci, Cardinals who were of Saints Nereus and Achileus, St. Cyriac in Thermis and Sant'Angelo in Pescheria respectively.

A number of new items—buttons, cufflinks, shirts, hats, ties—have been added to the Armory as announced in the **Report of the Grand Armorer**.

Brother Warager in his **Report of the Grand Avocat** noted that GPUSA is renewing trademarks and entering into new contracts for additional trademark rights.

Past Grand Prior Keith Larson presented his **Report from the Raymond Davis Templar Trust**. The purpose of the Corporation is to operate exclusively for the benefit and support of the functions, obligations, purposes and objectives GPUSA and/or its subordinates, which qualify as exempt organizations under Section 501(c)(3).

Rev. Theodore Schneider reminded Pories in his **Report of the Grand Chaplain** that the Chaplains Corps. is there to help the Pories in their spiritual and Christian charity activities. Rev. Schneider would like the Corps. to have a more visible presence at the Priory and Grand Priory level.



The **Report on the Order of Merit** by David Appleby noted nine (9) presentations of this, the highest award of GPUSA, in 2014 and 12 inducted in 2015. The Order of Merit of the GPUSA was created as a method to award distinguished persons and to recognize their service in support of the goals of the Grand Priory of the United States of the Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem. Recipients neither need to be members of the Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem nor Christians. The administrative structure of the Order of Merit is the Honorary Priory of Nieuw Amsterdam.

A new position of Grand Information Security Officer was created by Grand Prior Shield and approved by the Membership. In his **Report of the Grand Information Security Officer**, Brother Megagiannis emphasized the need for personal, Priory, and Grand Priory security and initiatives to secure information.

In the **Report of the Grand Webmaster**, it was announced by Chvse. and Chev. Watson that a new template has been created for Pories that include both public and member sections. Pories were encouraged to link their approved webpages to the GPUSA site. It was also announced that the Templar Times has a 44% readership; as compared to the 23% industry standard for non-profits.

Program Coordinator Dreger presented an overview and summary in his **Report on the Pilgrim's Medal Program**. The Pilgrim Medal Program was established as a charitable project to assist with the preservation of the Holy Places in Jerusalem and promote the pious practice of pilgrimage. Three distinguished medal sets have been created to recognize members of the GPUSA, members of OSMTH, and Friends of the Order who actively support these principles. Brother Dreger will be stepping down as Coordinator this year.

Representative Bateman presented his **Report on UN Activities** in which he announced that GPUSA was voted in as a member of the Commission on NGOs (**CoNGO**). "CoNGO's vision is to be the primary support and platform for a civil society represented by a global community of informed, empowered and committed NGOs that fully participate with the United Nations in decision-making and programs leading to a better world, a world of economic and social justice." GPUSA members serve on a variety of UN Committees.

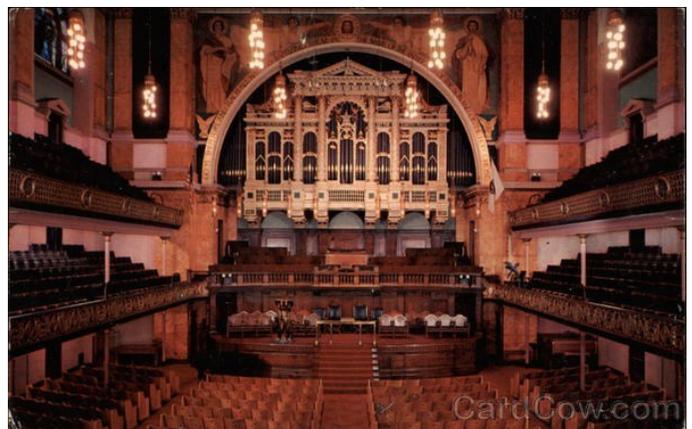
Under "**Old Business**", the Priory of St. James of Jerusalem was dissolved. Members have been assigned to other Pories. A vote of the Membership supported the dissolution.

Under "**New Business**", an update on **The River Jordan Project** was presented by DGP Digilio. The land and water rights were donated by King Abdullah II of Jordan. The ecumenical church and research center is supported by 12 denominations. Visit their website [here](#).

The 2016 Grand C&I will probably be moved from new Orleans to Savannah, GA. The dates have yet to be determined. Watch the website and this newsletter for details.

The Grand Chaplain closed the Grand Council Meeting of Saturday, May 23rd 2015 with a **Benediction**.

Convent and Investiture



In a city full of historic churches, the 2015 Grand Convent and Investiture was held in Converse hall of the Tremont Temple Baptist Church.

Tremont Temple Baptist Church has a rich history that has made it a leader in the Boston area for social justice, evangelism, and human rights. In the 1830s the struggle for social justice was seen in the fight for the abolition of slavery. The churches were at times defenders of the status quo and even charged for seating. In 1838 a group of men led by Timothy Gilbert started the Baptist Free Church. It was "free" in that there was no rent charged for pews, but more than that it was for the freedom of all people, being the first integrated church in America.

On 28 December 1843, the Free Church Baptists bought the Tremont Theatre, built in 1827 in Greek Revival style. They renamed it the **Tremont Temple** and adapted it for use for religious worship. The Temple was damaged by fire in April 1852 and subsequent fires in 1879 and 1893.

The congregation had decided on a new, larger structure, which was completed and opened in May 1896. Designed by architect Clarence Blackall. You can view a history [here](#).

INVESTITURE

Postulants Inducted were:

- CPT Alisa D'Agostino (St. David of Wales)
- Charles Dow (St. David of Wales)
- Linda Dow (St. David of Wales)
- Anthony Paglia (St. David of Wales)
- Kristin Polito (St. David of Wales)
- William Sheridan (St. David of Wales)
- Kay Swanquist (St. David of Wales)
- COL James Wiegel (St. David of Wales)
- MSG Heather Lownes (St. Thomas a' Becket)
- 1SGT Robert Lownes (St. Thomas a' Becket)
- David Hill (The Monitor & Merrimack)
- Judith Sparrow (The Monitor & Merrimack)
- COL Joseph F. Molinari (The Temple Church)

The International OSMTH Meritorious Service Award was presented to Chev. COL Robert Bateman, GCTJ, GMTJ

The Distinguished Service Award was presented to MG Chev. Dennis Fagan, GCTJ, GMTJ

LTC Chev. Dennis E. Morgan, KCTJ and Chev. Peter Hamilton NEE, KCTJ were promoted to Grand Officer

The Dignity of Grand Croix was presented to:

- Chev. Rodney H. Allen, M.D., GOTJ, CMTJ
- COL Chvse. Elizabeth J. Barnsdale, GOTJ
- CAPT Chev. Clayton M. Kemmerer, GOTJ
- SGM Chev. Thomas K. Marshall, GOTJ
- Chev. William H. Phillips, GOTJ, CMTJ
- Chev. Ralph D. Robinson, GOTJ
- Chvse. Kathleen T. Watson, GOTJ, CMTJ

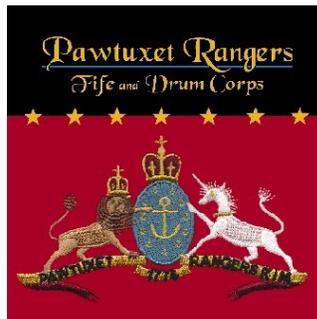
Rev. Chev. David A. Hockensmith, GOTJ was inducted as Commander into the Order of Merit

Inducted into the Order of Merit as Grand Commander were:

- CAPT Chev. Douglas M. Johnson, GOTJ
- Rt. Rev. Chev. Michael P. Henson, KCTJ
- CAPT Chev. David M. Schorn, GCTJ

Grand Banquet

The Convent and Investiture banquet was held at the Sheraton Boston Hotel following a reception and silent auction in the foyer.



The Procession of Grand Officers, International Dignitaries, and Past Grand Priors and the posting of the Colors were led by the Fifes

The Rangers are among the oldest existing chartered commands in the country. The Pawtuxet Rangers were chartered in 1774 to protect the thriving seaport of Pawtuxet, and at various times throughout the Revolutionary War

manned the fort on Pawtuxet Neck, a function vital to the defense of both Pawtuxet and Providence.

I had the honor of sitting with the Grand Prior of Finland and his wife, the Current and Past Grand Priors of Canada, and our Brother from Springfield, MO and his wife. Being in Boston, of course we dined on New England Clam Chowder (Chowda), Maine Lobster Tail and Fig-Glazed Filet Mignon, Twice Baked Lobster Potato, Boston Cream Pie, and assorted wines. Since it was the birthday of the former Grand Prior of Canada—who received special recognition at the Banquet—we had additional birthday cake at our table.

Thank you to the Grand Steering Committee and the Knights and Dames of the Priory of St. David of Wales for a memorable Grand Convent and Investiture.

Be sure to check the GPUSA website for updated photos of the event.

PRECEPTORY MEETING

The Turner Boardroom at the Kansas City Central Library – 14 West 10th Street – has been reserved from 2-4 PM on Sunday, June 28th for a foundational meeting of the Preceptory of St. Mary the Virgin, SMOTJ. If you have not done so already, please use the following link to RSVP:

<http://doodle.com/dvw3szvad2srrkbq>

Quick Links

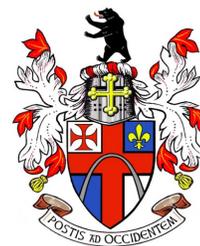


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A bulletin from the Preceptory of St. Mary the Virgin



Volume 1, Issue 3, August 2015



New SMOTJ Clan Badge

In June, the Priory of St. Louis the Crusader received verbal approval from the Grand Chancellor Chev. Patrick Carney, GCTJ, GMTJ and written support from the Grand Armorer Chev. Robert Davis III, GCTJ, to produce a cloisonné (color) Templar Clan Badge for sale by the Priory to raise funds for charitable contributions. Working with the Grand Herald Chev. Russ Wayne Copping, GCTJ the design incorporates the Croix Pattee and moto of the Order. A donor has generously covered production costs for the first 50 badges. The badge will be available for purchase from the [Priory Armorer](#) in both a bolt- and pin-backed version.

PRECEPTORY MEETING

The next meeting of St. Mary the Virgin is scheduled from 12:00-2:00 at St. Mary's Episcopal Church, 1307 Holmes Street, Kansas City, MO 64106. Knights and Dames are encouraged to attend the 10 AM service. Register your RSVP or regrets at:

<http://doodle.com/hbrziwze344nuad>

Brother Knights and Sister Dames;

At every Investiture, the Aumonier requests that before departing, each Knight, Dame, and Companion of the Order of Merit, pay their mite. The *Lesson of the widow's mite* is presented in the Synoptic Gospels (Mark 12:41-44, Luke 21:1-4), in which Jesus is teaching at the Temple in Jerusalem. In the story, a widow donates two small coins, while wealthy people donate much more. Jesus explains to his disciples that the small sacrifices of the poor mean more to God than the extravagant, but proportionately lesser, donations of the rich.

By now, you should have received a notice from the Grand Priory of your 2015-2016 SMOTJ Oblation. All Knights and Dames are required to pay annual oblations. A newly invested Knight or Dame pays an initial passage fee when they are invested. This serves as his/her oblation for the remainder of that oblation year.

The oblation notice you received includes the mandatory Grand Priory and Priory oblations as well as optional donations. While these donations are optional, they are very much encouraged. From previous donations, GPUSA has been able to fulfill its mission to help Christians at risk in the Holy Land and elsewhere. Donations made to the Grand Priory and to the Priory of St. Louis are 100% tax deductible.

As noted in the June bulletin, oblations paid to GPUSA in 2014 were down 17.8% from the previous year. Oblations are the primary source of income for the Priory and enable us to keep the cost of Convents and Investitures to a minimum and still make contributions to charitable causes. If you are unable to meet your oblations, contact one of the Priory Officers for assistance.

I have the honor to be,

Fraternally Yours,
Non nobis Domine

[Dr., Chev., Peter L. Heineman, GOTJ](#)
Preceptor



Prior's Perspective



For over 900 years, since our inception, Templars have been battling as / for Christians. We have been God's Holy Warriors defending, protecting, and caring for his children. In the 11th Century our battle grounds and weapons looked a little different than the ones of the 21st century, but our purpose and fight have not changed at all. The threats, persecution, or struggles Christians face are as ever present as they ever have been. The media shows us that every day. Whether in our back yard, or across the world, God's children need our commitment.

This means that as Templars, the responsibilities bestowed upon us from the beginning, to take care of God's children, is still woven in our hearts and the fabric of the Mantles we wear, and the Oath we pledge to uphold. We must not forget who we are, what we are about, what we have vowed to do, and the legacy we must protect of those who came before us. Our actions every day, or opportunities we encounter, present a choice.

Too often we allow our schedules and lives to be interrupted by tasks, or selfish pursuits. The time limitations that we tend to put upon ourselves is diminishing what we really should be investing our time in = caring for God's children. Trust me when I say, I completely understand how the times from then to now are different, but it doesn't give us any excuses to not make an effort or make giving of ourselves to others a Priority.

I read a report by the "Pew Research Center" – a non-partisan research company who spent 6 years researching and collecting data about the [Future of World Religions; Population Growth Projections, 2010 – 2050](#). In a nutshell it presented data on how they saw the religious profile of the world changing, along with the number of Christians, Muslims, Hindu, Jews, Buddhist, Atheists, etc., that will be in the world and what the contributing factors were. The report was interesting, and eye opening and showed a rapidly expanding Muslim growth (by 73%) and a very small Christian growth (35%) as the global population overall.

Over the years we all have read our fair share of data and they all have their merits and vantage points. This one certainly made me stop and take notice of some of

their facts. One thing I took from this is that we all need to re-engage in our Faith a little more and make it a focal point in our actions. The more time we spend being and acting as a Christian – and sharing God's love and grace with the world, the more we can make a difference in their lives.

Since 'putting thing on a calendar' is how we seem to prioritize things these days, I challenge myself, along with our whole Priory to try to do the following:

- Schedule time with God – spend this time in prayer, and relax your heart and mind and be ready to receive God's guidance
- Find an opportunity to serve – make a conscious effort to seek out an area that you are passionate about, and give your time to God's Children
- Connect with a fellow Knight or Dame – over the phone, or in person – spend time with a fellow Templar either socially or while serving God's Children together

With our hearts, minds, and hands being guided by God, we will see the difference in not only the lives of those we encounter, but in our own. The fulfillment we will gain cannot be matched by anything else in the world, and as each day passes, it will become easier to find that block of time each day.

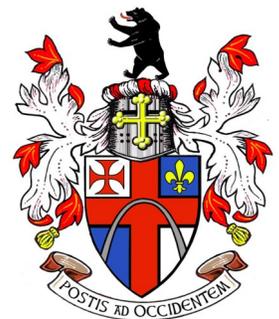
Your Servant in Christ,

Non nobis Domine

† Chev. Ian Good, KCTJ
Prior

Fall Priory Convent

The Priory of St. Louis the Crusader will convene its Fall C&I on Oct 17th at the Academy of the Sacred Heart in St. Charles, MO. Grand Secretary Chvse. Jean Goulka, GOTJ, GMTJ will officiate .



2016 Grand Convent

The Priory of St. Vincent will host the 2016 GPUSA Grand Convent in Savannah Georgia, May 26-29th at the Marriott Riverfront Hotel. "Early Bird" discounts are available. Login to the SMOTJ website to register online.



About the year 1119, a new religious order was established by French noblemen. Called the Knights Templar, they were to protect Christian pilgrims entering the Holy Land and to defend the conquests of the Crusades. However, they had not yet received any official sanction from the papacy.



Pope Callixtus II or Callistus II, born Guy of Burgundy, reigned as Pope from 1 February 1119 to his death in 1124. His pontificate was

shaped by the Investiture Controversy, which was settled through the Concordat of Worms in 1122; an agreement between Pope Calixtus II and Holy Roman Emperor Henry V.

Calixtus II died 13 December 1124 and was succeeded by Honorius II.

Honorius II was Pope from 21 December 1124 to his death in 1130. Although from a humble background, his obvious intellect and outstanding abilities saw him promoted up through the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Attached to the Frangipani family of Rome, his election as pope was contested by a rival candidate, Celestine II, and force was used to guarantee his election.

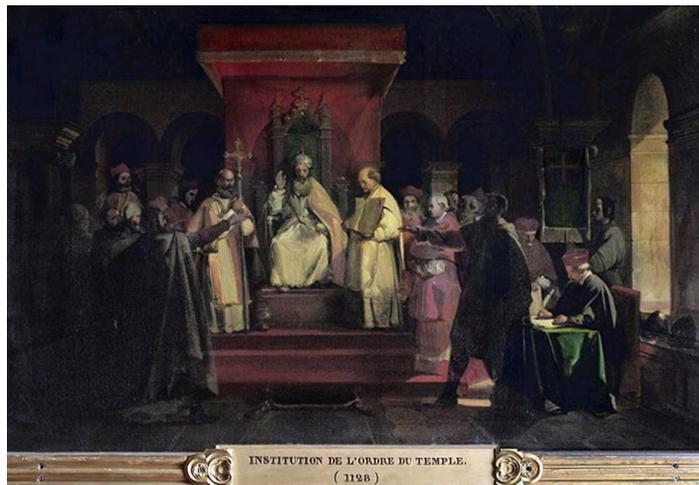


Honorius' pontificate was concerned with ensuring that the privileges the Roman Catholic Church had obtained through the Concordat of Worms were preserved and, if possible, extended. He was the first pope to confirm the election of the Holy Roman Emperor. Distrustful of the traditional Benedictine order, he favored new monastic orders, such as the Augustinians and the Cistercians, and sought to exercise more control over the larger monastic centers of Monte Cassino and Cluny Abbey. He also approved the new military order of the Knights Templar.

Members of the order appeared before the Council of Troyes in Champagne, France in 1129 (sometimes listed as 1128), where the Council expressed its approval of the order and commissioned Bernard of Clairvaux to draw up the order's rules, which now included vows of poverty,

chastity and obedience. The order and the rules were subsequently approved by Honorius. Honorius, as suzerain of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, re-confirmed the election of King Baldwin II of Jerusalem and established him as the royal patron of the Templars.

At the Council of Troyes in 1129, Pope Honorius II approved the creation of the Order of the Knights Templar. The Latin rule (*Regula pauperum commilitonum Christi Templique Salomonici*) was accepted as the basis for the Order's operations.



Pope Honorius II granting official recognition to the Knights Templar

Honorius, as suzerain of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, re-confirmed the election of King Baldwin II of Jerusalem and established him as the royal patron of the Templars. Honorius tried to manage as best he could the rivalries of the different princes and high-ranking ecclesiastics that were destabilizing the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem.



After almost a year of suffering a painful illness, Honorius fell seriously ill in early 1130. He died on the evening of 13 February 1130 and was buried in the south transept of the San Gregorio Magno al Celio monastery in Rome, Italy, next to the body of Callixtus II.

precept

A bulletin from the Preceptory of St. Mary the Virgin



Volume 1, Issue 4, October 2015



Priory of St. Louis the Crusader Convent & Investiture

The pleasure of your company is requested at the
Fall Convocation Meeting, Convent & Investiture



Postulant Reception
6:00 PM Friday 16 October

Postulant Vigil
9:00 PM Friday 16 October

Convent
10:00 AM Saturday 17 October

Investiture
2:30 PM Saturday 17 October

Banquet
5:30 PM Saturday 17 October

Brother Knights and Sister Dames;

Our Order seeks to emulate the chivalric and charitable traditions of the original Templars, applying them energetically and selflessly to Christian charitable endeavors. According to the World Giving Index, the USA is the most charitable nation on earth; in the USA there are over 1.5 million registered charities. As noted in the minutes from the Preceptory's meeting of 28 June 2015, GPUSA's total charitable outreach for 2014 was \$380,770.

The options can be overwhelming when you are looking for a charity to support. The amount you give won't matter unless you make sure your money gets to the right place. Besides avoiding the fake charities out there, there are many legitimate charities you may want to avoid because they are wasteful or ineffective with their funding. It's worth doing a little research to make sure your hard-earned dollars are put to good use and you make a donation that truly benefits a cause you believe in.

Start by identifying some of the causes you'd like to support, say blindness, education, or wildlife preservation. You can use websites like GreatNonprofits.org, myPhilanthropedia (a division of GuideStar), GuideStar.org, GiveWell.org, and Charity Navigator. Take a look at the charity's mission. Does it inspire you? Does it speak to your core values? Or perhaps a cause is close to your heart. Maybe a loved one battled lung [cancer](#) or your nephew suffers from [autism](#); then you are naturally more compelled to contribute to a cause you have personal experience with.

Once you've narrowed your selection review the charity's financial reports to be sure they're administering their donations effectively. A legitimate charity will make these financial reports available either via request or a listing on their website. Find out what it takes a charity to raise one dollar. If it's over sixty-cents, you should dig a little deeper and find out why. If a charity is in a start-up phase they may be spending more outright on marketing costs to get their name out. An established charity should be able to demonstrate lower numbers and better financial efficiency.

Another great resource is the annual [Forbes list of the country's 200 largest charities](#) which contains a wealth of information, including information on how efficient a charity is with their funding. And, don't forget your local churches.

And let us not forget about the Jerusalem Mite and Nursing Scholarship programs through GPUSA the Priory and the Preceptory. Members can pay their mite and donate to the scholarship program online.

Whatever your charitable donation, whether it be in sweat equity or humanitarian cash and in-kind donations, thank you.

Fraternally yours,
Non nobis Domine

[Dr., Chev., Peter L. Heineman, GOTJ](#)
Preceptor



The Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem®
Autonomous Grand Priory of the United States of America
Priory of St. Louis the Crusader

Prior's Perspective



The season of fall is my personal favorite time of the year. The change from hot muggy, humid days, to cool crisp days and evenings, along with the change of the colors of the trees. The season leads us into the last few months of the year where we begin to prepare our wardrobes, our homes, yards, and our minds for the coming changes. Our Priory prepares for our upcoming Convent and Investiture – a time where we come together and renew our commitment, and celebrate the Investiture of new members into the Order.

As Christians – we celebrate and wind down the calendar year with festivities, such as Thanksgiving, (Thanking God for all the blessings we have), and preparing for Christmas – (Celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ.) As I think about these things, I think about other religions, and what their faith celebrates during these same months, and what some of their practices and preparations are. In the Jewish community, our friends, celebrate this time of year with a different mindset / while being somewhat similar.

Recently – (beginning at sundown on September 13th and concluding on the evening of September 15th), was the Jewish High Holiday of Rosh Hashanah. Some of you may be very familiar with this holy celebration, while others may not. Rosh Hashanah means “Head of the Year” – and is the Jewish New Year Celebration. This is a time of inner renewal and introspection – looking back at the past year, making amends, and planning the changes to be made. Rosh Hashanah’s begins the *10 Days of Awe*, where it is said that during these 10 days; God judges all creatures and writes their future for the coming year in the *Book of Life*. The *Shofar* is sounded (Ram’s Horn) which is much like a Trumpet blast – signifying a call to repentance and a reminder that God is King. There is a walk to a naturally flowing body of water, where people pull bread crumbs from their pockets and throw them into the water, carrying the meaning and symbolism of ‘casting away their sins’. It is customary during the 2nd night of Rosh Hashanah to eat a ‘new fruit’ such as eating an apple dipped in honey; symbolizing the Newness and hopefully sweet year that is to come, and emphasizes the special relationship between God and humanity.

If you stop and think about it; our two faiths grew out of the same soil, with the same rich history, scripture, and culture. Christianity was born out of the Jewish Faith, and Jesus carrying in person - the message of never ending love and his ultimate sacrifice for all of mankind.

As we turn our clocks back – let’s turn our minds back for a moment. Let’s not forget who we are, the sacrifice that was made for us all, the vows we hold true as Templars, where our lives have carried us this past year, and the encounters we have had. When you sit and contemplate what would the Book of Life say next to your name – and what God would scribe for your coming year; do you consider what you could have done differently, or do you think about what you are going to do differently? Each and every day, we should approach the gift that was given to us as a new celebration, and an opportunity to make a difference and share our gifts with all God’s children. If we embrace each day this way, we will not have to ask ourselves “what have I done”; instead, we will already know the answer.

I look forward to celebrating with each of you on October 17th.

Your Servant in Christ,

Non nobis Domine

† Chev. Ian Good, KCTJ
Prior IX

At each Convent, the Inspector reads the early history of the Order. The history relates how the King of Jerusalem, Baldwin II, offered quarters in his palace, located in the Al-Aqsa Mosque to a community of knights “traditionally numbered at nine.” The nine (the exact number, names, and spelling vary by historian) were Hugues de Payens, Geoffroy de Saint-Omer, André de Montbard, Gondemare, Godfroi, Roral, Geoffroi Bisol, Payen de Montdidier and Archambaud de Saint-Agnan, all of whom were chevaliers of France who had served under Godefroy (Godfrey) de Bouillon.

Godfrey of Bouillon (18 September 1060 – 18 July 1100) was a medieval Frankish knight who was one of the leaders of the First Crusade from 1096 until his death. He was the Lord of Bouillon, from which he took his by-



name, from 1076 and the Duke of Lower Lorraine from 1087. After the successful siege of Jerusalem in 1099, Godfrey became the first ruler of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, although he refused the title “King”; as he believed that the true King of Jerusalem was Christ; preferring the title of “Advocate of the Holy Sepulchre”.

According to William of Tyre, the later 12th-century chronicler of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, Godfrey was “*tall of stature, not extremely so, but still taller than the*

average man. He was strong beyond compare, with solidly-built limbs and a stalwart chest. His features were pleasing, his beard and hair of medium blond."

Because he had been the first ruler in Jerusalem, Godfrey of Bouillon was idealized in later accounts. He was depicted as the leader of the crusades, the king of Jerusalem, and the legislator who laid down the assizes of Jerusalem, and he was included among the ideal knights known as the Nine Worthies. In reality, Godfrey was only one of several leaders of the crusade, which also included Raymond IV of Toulouse, Bohemund of Taranto, Robert of Flanders, Stephen of Blois and Baldwin of Boulogne. Baldwin I of Jerusalem, Godfrey's younger brother, became the first titled king when he succeeded Godfrey in 1100. Baldwin II – also mentioned in the History – was Godfrey's cousin.



Hugues de Payens or Payns (c. 1070 – 24 May 1136) was the co-founder and first Grand Master of the Knights Templar. With Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, he created the *Latin Rule*; the code of behavior for the Order. Payns is a village near Troyes, in Champagne (eastern France).

Count Hugh of Champagne made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in 1104–07 and visited Jerusalem for a second time in 1114–16. It is probable that he was accompanied by Hugues de Payens, who remained there after the Count returned to France as there is a charter

with "Hugonis de Peans" in the witness list from Jerusalem in 1120 and again in 1123. In 1125 his name appears again as a witness to a donation, this time accompanied by the title "magister militum Templi" ("Master of the Knights of the Temple").

As Grand Master, Hugues de Payens led the Order for almost twenty years until his death, helping to establish the Order's foundations as an important and influential military and financial institution. On his visit to England and Scotland in 1128, he raised men and money for the Order, and also founded their first House in London and another near Edinburgh at Balantrodoch, now known as Temple, Midlothian. The *Latin Rule* laying down the way of life of the Order, attributed to Hugues de Payens and Bernard of Clairvaux, was confirmed in 1129 at the Council of Troyes over which Pope Honorius II presided.

Hugues de Payens died, apparently in Palestine, in 1136. The circumstances and date of his death are not

recorded in any chronicle, though the Templars commemorated him every year on 24 May, and it's presumed he died of old age. The 16th century historian Marco Antonio Guarini claimed that Hugues was buried in the Church of San Giacomo at Ferrara. He was succeeded as Grand Master by Robert de Craon.

Co-founder of the Order, **Godfrey of Saint-Omer** (also known as Gaufred, Godefroi, or Godfrey de St Omer, Saint Omer) was a Flemish knight. He is said to have come from the family of the Lords of Saint-Omer (in today's northern France), possibly the son of William I, Lord of Saint Omer and Melisende de Piquigny. William and Melisende were known to have a son, Hugh, and both William and Hugh participated in the First Crusade as vassals of Robert II of Flanders. Hugh of Saint-Omer was also mentioned as one of the best knights in the Kingdom of Jerusalem.

There are conflicting reports as to Godfrey's relationship to William and Hugh. Chronologically Godfrey may have been Hugh's brother but it is also said that he was Hugh's son. On the list of crusaders, a Gauthier de Saint-Omer is listed, which could be a mistake for Gaufred (Gauthier de Saint-Omer was not yet born). Therefore Godfrey probably came to Jerusalem in 1099 with William I and Hugh.

According to legend, Hugues de Payens and Godfrey were so poor that between the two of them they had only one horse, and this gave rise to the famous image on the seal of the Templars of two men riding a single horse.

André de Montbard (5 November c. 1097 – 17 January 1156) was the fifth Grand Master of the Knights Templar. The Montbard family came from Hochadel in Burgundy, and André was an uncle of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, being a half-brother of Bernard's mother Aleth de Montbard. He entered the Order in 1129 and went to Palestine, where he quickly rose to the rank of seneschal, deputy and second-in-command to the Grand Master. After the Siege of Ascalon on 22 August 1153, André was elected Grand Master to replace Bernard de Tremelay, who had been killed during an assault on the city on 16 August.

He died on 17 January 1156, in Jerusalem and was succeeded by Bertrand de Blanchefort.

Gondemare and **Rosal** have obscure ties to the Templars. It is believed that they were Cisterian monks that had transferred to the new Order.

Payen de Montdidier and **Archambaud de Saint-Agnan** were relatives of the ruling house of Flanders.

I could find no information on **Godfroi** (Godefroy or Geoffroi) **Bisol**.

What began with nine poor knights has grown to an international Order with Grand Priorities in Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, England, Wales, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Mexico, Norway, Portugal, Serbia, United States, and NATO.

precept

A bulletin from the Preceptory of St. Mary the Virgin



Volume 1, Issue 5, December 2015



2016 Grand Convent

The Priory of St. Vincent will host the 2016 GPUSA Grand Convent in Savannah Georgia, May 26-29th at the Marriott Riverfront Hotel. Highlights include:

- Roundtable meetings/training for officers
- Special sessions on Postulant Training, Pilgrimage, and the Raymond Davis Foundation
- Grand Prior's Reception
- A memorable Vigil for Postulants, then the Grand Convent Ceremony for all, in the [Wesley Monumental Methodist Church](#), a short ride from the hotel.

Quick Links

www.



smotj.org

Brother Knights and Sister Dames;

As Grand Prior V, Chev. Daniel LeVert Coleman, GCTJ, GMTJ so eloquently notes, two thousand years ago a child was born in the humblest of circumstances; a birth marked by extraordinary events, yet in the most ordinary of surroundings. He grew in silence and obscurity, yet when His voice was heard, His words filled the world, and He was the Word.

He gave us the world, and thereby us, the most valuable possessions there are, which are gifts we accept or reject. These treasures are Faith, Hope, and Charity. To accept these great gifts will all our hearts and souls, and then try to live within the dictates of this Faith, this Hope, and this Love, means to dwell as a soldier of Christ in God's house as a Knight of God's Temple.

May God bless us all with perseverance and endurance so that our faith may become ever stronger so that our hope may bring others out of despair and so that our love and charity may touch many, many people.

As Knights Templar, we must do all that we do in His name and for His Glory.



I WISH YOU AND ALL THOSE CLOSE TO YOU

A Joyous and Blessed Christmas

AND A NEW YEAR OF HAPPINESS AND HOPE

For a World of Peace

Fraternally Yours,
Non nobis Domine

Dr. Peter L. Heineman

Dr., Chev., Peter L. Heineman, GOTJ
Preceptor



Prior's Perspective

Many folks have asked me where the name of our Priory comes from. Several think because our Priory is centered in St. Louis, Missouri that is the primary reason, well that is somewhat fitting, but it does not really tell the whole story. St. Louis the Crusader and the French King who was canonized are one in the same. King Louis IX, was a devout Christian, and was the only French Monarch to be declared a Saint. King Louis IX went on two Crusades, the 7th and the 8th. While neither one of them were considered to be successful, it was while he was on his last Crusade in Tunis, August 25th, 1270 where Louis IX died from dysentery as many people did in Tunis during this time. There have been movies, and many works of literature that showcase "St. Louis and the Last Crusade". Louis IX was crowned king in 1226 at the age of 12. His mother, Blanche of Castile was the Regent until Louis could become of age. She raised Louis and the rest of her children, to follow her strong Christian, and Catholic beliefs, and to always take care of God's children. Louis spent six years on his first crusade while in his 30's in 1248 (7th Crusade). He felt very strongly that his obligations as a son of the Church outweighed the responsibilities as a Monarch. Often times he would refer to himself as a Lieutenant of God on Earth. King Louis IX often stated, that *everything that he did was for the Glory of God and for the good of his people*. He is renowned for his charity, and his protection of the poor. It was because of these and many other actions that Pope Boniface VIII proclaimed the canonization of Louis IX as a Saint, July 11, 1297 – 27 years after his death.

As you can see it is very befitting that the namesake of St. Louis the Crusader fits our Priory. The King that our Priory City Center is named after - the same King known for leading the same Crusades that the Knight Templars fought in – the same King who's own personal Christian beliefs that "everything he did was for the Glory of God" and for taking care of those around him would be the same beliefs and vows of our Order.

Saint Louis the Crusader (the French King)- might not have much success while leading the 7th and 8th Crusades, but his beliefs, and mission to serve God's children, and to do everything for the Glory of God lives in all modern day Templars. It lives within you. It is with great honor that our own Priory carry's the name of this amazing leader who was revered for his charity. It is our turn, Saint Louis the Crusader (the Priory) to pick up his torch, and carry his name, and his mission forward on our own battlegrounds. Our Crusade is now –and we need to remember not only as Knights who and what we represent, but to also remember what Louis IX represented. We need to make sure that we continue to serve God's children as he did and live up to the namesake from which we come from.



The First Crusade

Historians consider that between 1096 and 1291 there were seven major Crusades and numerous minor ones. A pluralist view of the Crusades has developed in the 20th century inclusive of all papal-led efforts, whether in the Middle East or in Europe. This takes into account the view of the Roman Catholic Church and medieval contemporaries such as Saint Bernard of Clairvaux that gave equal precedence to comparable military campaigns against pagans, heretics and many undertaken for political reasons. This wider definition includes the persecution of heretics in Southern France, the political conflict between Christians in Sicily, the Christian re-conquest of Iberia and the conquest of heathens in the Baltic. Countering this is the view the crusades were a defensive war in the Middle East against Muslims to free the Holy Land from Muslim rule.

The First Crusade (1096–1099) in the traditional numbering system started as a widespread pilgrimage in western Christendom and ended as a military expedition by Roman Catholic Europe to regain the Holy Lands taken in the Muslim conquests of the Levant (632–661), ultimately resulting in the recapture of Jerusalem in 1099. It was launched on 27 November 1095 by Pope Urban II (at the Council of Clermont) with the primary goal of responding to an appeal from Byzantine Emperor Alexios I Komnenos, who requested that western volunteers come to his aid and help to repel the invading Seljuq Turks from Anatolia. An additional goal soon became the principal objective—the Christian reconquest of the sacred city of Jerusalem and the Holy Land and the freeing of the Eastern Christians from Muslim rule.

The official crusader armies set off from France and Italy at different times in August and September 1096, with Hugh of Vermandois departing first, and the bulk of the army dividing into four parts travelling separately to Constantinople. In all, the western forces may have totaled as many as 100,000 people, counting both combatants and non-combatants. The armies journeyed eastward by land toward Constantinople, where they received a warm welcome from the Byzantine Emperor. Pledging to restore lost territories to the empire, the main army, mostly French and Norman knights under baronial leadership, marched south through Anatolia. The leaders of the First Crusade included Godfrey of Bouillon, Robert Curthose, Hugh of Vermandois, Baldwin of Bouillon, Tancred de Hauteville, Raymond of Toulouse, Bohemond of Taranto, Robert II, Count of Flanders, and Stephen, Count of Blois. The King of France and Henry IV, Holy Roman Emperor, were both in conflict with the Papacy and did not take part.

The Crusaders arrived at Jerusalem, launched an assault on the city, and captured it in July 1099. They also established the crusader states of the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the County of Tripoli, the Principality of Antioch, and the County of Edessa.

Non Nobis, Domine, Non Nobis, Sed Nomini Tuo Da Glorium