

Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Florida

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GRAND COMMANDER'S MESSAGE

Greetings Sir Knights,

The first District Festival was held in the 1st District on May 16 & 17 at J. Dewey Hawkins Lodge in Ft. Lauderdale. I would like to thank the Companions and Sir Knights of that District for all of the hard work at the Festival. It was such a great success. We knighted thirty-two new members and we had over eighty in attendance with all three Commanders present, representing Miami No. 13 KT, Virgil Salisbury, Palm Beach No. 18 KT, Richard Jones, and Melita No. 35 KT, Jonathan Macadon. We have knighted in 2014 year to date 94 new members. I would like to thank the Grand Commandery Officers who assisted in conferring the Orders of the Temple. Your Grand Officers are willing to assist in any way possible.

I will report on our District Festivals that were held in the 3rd District (St. Petersburg, Tampa, and Clearwater York Rite Bodies) on June 19 & 20 and the 9th District (Panama City, Marianna, and Tallahassee York Rite Bodies) on June 27 & 28 in the August supplement.

Please mark your calendars for upcoming District Festivals. Note the change of venue for the 4th District Festival.

8th District (Lake City, Lawtey, Ocala, and Gainesville York Rite Bodies) R.T. Schafer Lodge No. 350, 2505 NE 9th Street, Gainesville, FL Friday night, July 25th and Saturday, July 26th

4th District (Highlands, Plant City, and Lakeland York Rite Bodies) Sebring Lodge No. 249, 1809 Home Avenue, Sebring, FL Friday night, August 15th and Saturday, August 16th.

Something that is dear to my heart is the Holy Land Pilgrimage. As I stated last month, my objective is for us to send 10 ministers to the Holy Land, one from each District for February or March 2015.

The cost to send a minister is \$3390.00 from JFK to Israel plus airfare from their local airport to JFK. Please get with your local recorder to nominate your ministers. I will quote one minister, who made a Pilgrimage in the past to say, "When I read the Bible before, it was in black and white and after the trip to the Holy Land, it was in color." All monies are due to the Grand Encampment Chairman Emmett Mills by October 15, 2014.

Sir Knights, as we once again celebrate Independence Day, we need to reflect how good Almighty God has been to our nation and our freedom. I think about some of our forefathers such as Thomas Jefferson and John Adams who opposed each other and died within hours of each other, on the 50th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence July 4, 1826. Together, and as political rivals, they had done as much or more to shape the nation in those first 50 years as any two people in our country.

In many respects, the two were poles apart. Adams was a New England overachiever, and Jefferson, a southern aristocrat. Adams was a Federalist, Jefferson the classic Republican. Adams was a political animal; Jefferson was most at home on his Virginia mountaintop. But according to historian Joseph Ellis, they "came to embody the American dialogue".

Jefferson was asked to prepare a speech for that 4th of July. Though illness prevented him from delivering this last effort, it contained some of his most stirring language. Speaking of the celebrations, he wrote, "May it be to the world, what I believe it to be, the signal of arousing men to burst the chains under which monkish ignorance and superstition had persuaded them to bind themselves, and to assume the blessings and security of self-government."

Adams too, was asked to help celebrate the occasion in Washington, Philadelphia, and New York. Likewise, illness prevented him from traveling. He died about five o'clock on the 4th. His last words were to the effect that Jefferson still lived. Adams was wrong by about five hours. At a dedication of a battlefield cemetery four score and seven years after the original Declaration of Independence we are still celebrating "a nation conceived in Liberty", and this holds true today.

Yours in Christ,
S.K. Paul W. Friend
Right Eminent Grand Commander