

Rite Notes  
Membership and Recruiting  
Grand York Rite Bodies of Florida  
15 December 2009

## ‘Christmas Message’

After a year and a half of preparing the membership newsletter, I would like to change this month. Many of you have seen the following, but it seems to be appropriate to distribute it again. It does remind us that Christmas can be for everyone. Each interpreting it and viewing it as his heart allows. May each of you have a wondrous Christmas and New Years, and if you are traveling, please drive safely.

**Thursday, October 25, 2007**

**Ben Stein discusses Christmas**

**The following was written by Ben Stein and recited by him on CBS Sunday Morning Commentary.**

**My confession:**

**I am a Jew, and every single one of my ancestors was Jewish. And it does not bother me even a little bit when people call those beautiful lit up, bejeweled trees Christmas trees. I don't feel threatened. I don't feel discriminated against. That's what they are: Christmas trees.**

**It doesn't bother me a bit when people say, "Merry Christmas" to me. I don't think they are slighting me or getting ready to put me in a ghetto. In fact, I kind of like it. It shows that we are all brothers and sisters celebrating this happy time of year. It doesn't bother me at all that there is a manger scene on display at a key intersection near my beach house in Malibu . If people want a creche, it's just as fine with me as is the Menorah a few hundred yards away.**

**I don't like getting pushed around for being a Jew, and I don't think Christians like getting pushed around for being Christians. I think people who believe in God are sick and tired of getting pushed around, period. I have no idea where the concept came from that America is an explicitly atheist country. I can't find it in the Constitution and I don't like it being shoved down my throat.**

**Or maybe I can put it another way: where did the idea come from that we should worship Nick and Jessica and we aren't allowed to worship God as we understand Him? I guess that's a sign that I'm getting old, too. But there are a lot of us who are wondering where Nick and Jessica came from and where the America we knew went to.**

**In light of the many jokes we send to one another for a laugh, this is a little different: This is not intended to be a joke; it's not funny, it's intended to get you thinking.**

**Billy Graham's daughter was interviewed on the Early Show and Jane Clayson asked her "How could God let something like this happen?" (regarding Katrina) Anne Graham gave an extremely profound and insightful response. She said, "I believe God is deeply saddened by this, just as we are, but for years we've been telling God to get out of our schools, to get out of our government and to get out of our lives. And being the gentleman He is, I believe He has calmly backed out. How can we expect God to give us His blessing and His protection if we demand He leave us alone?"**

**In light of recent events...terrorists attack, school shootings, etc. I think it started when Madeleine Murray O'Hare (she was murdered, her body found recently) complained she didn't want prayer in our schools, and we said OK. Then someone said you better not read the Bible in school. The Bible says thou shalt not kill, thou shalt not steal, and love your neighbor as yourself. And we said OK.**

**Then Dr. Benjamin Spock said we shouldn't spank our children when they misbehave because their little personalities would be warped and we might damage their self-esteem (Dr. Spock's son committed suicide). We said an expert should know what he's talking about. And we said OK.**

**Now we're asking ourselves why our children have no conscience, why they don't know right from wrong, and why it doesn't bother them to kill strangers, their classmates, and themselves.**

**Probably, if we think about it long and hard enough, we can figure it out. I think it has a great deal to do with "WE REAP WHAT WE SOW."**

**Funny how simple it is for people to trash God and then wonder why the world's going to hell. Funny how we believe what the newspapers say, but question what the Bible says. Funny how you can send 'jokes' through e-mail and they spread like wildfire but when you start sending messages regarding the Lord, people think twice about sharing. Funny how lewd, crude, vulgar and obscene articles pass freely through cyberspace, but public discussion of God is suppressed in the school and workplace.**

**Are you laughing?**

**Funny how we can be more worried about what other people think of us than what God thinks of us..**

**My Best Regards.**

**Honestly and respectfully,**

**Ben Stein**

**As of the 14 December, we have knighted 230 (compared to 133 last year) new Companions and Sir Knights. Only a few months before our Feb/March festivals begin. Lets continue our work during this period and began the process of bringing new brothers into our bodies. However, of more importance, we must keep those members that we currently have. Allow them to take a seat in the leadership of the body. If all seats are filled, encourage the to get involved in the ritual work as part of a degree team, but let them know that they are needed. As we begin to pay our per capita to Grand Commandery, make every effort to bring those lost companions and Sir Knights back into the fold so NPD's cease to exist.**

**Note: If any York Rite Bodies plan weekend festivals, please let me know, with the date, time, location and contact person, and I will put it in the next newsletter, and on the website. Remember, Membership and Retention is everyone's business.**

Dist 1

Dist 2            Slow Class

Dist 3            3&10 October                    Tampa  
                      March                                Tampa

Dist 4            Slow Class

Dist 5            4,11,18 Feb. 6, 27 Mar 2010    Eola, Orlando  
                      September                            Eola, Orlando

Dist 6            March 12-13, 2010                Box Ranch, Stuart (Outdoor degree)  
                      October 1-2, 2010                Melbourne YRB, Harbor City Lodge

Dist 7            March 2010                        Jax YRB  
                      October 29-30-31                Jax York Rite Temple

Dist 8            Feb 2010                            Gainesville  
                      March                                Ocala  
                      Sep/Oct/Nov 2010                Ocala

Dist 9            Feb 2010                            Tallahassee

Dist 10           March 2010                        Pensacola  
                      3 & 10 October 2010            Pensacola/Mariana

**If any of the above dates or numbers knighted are incorrect or if there are any additional dates please let me know, I will include them next time.**

HENRY A. ADAMS  
Eminent Grand Senior Warden  
Chairman, Membership Committee

Hm Ph: 321-726-6971

Cell: 321-795-8316

Fax: 321-951-9680

E-mail: hadams1@aol.com