

**GRAND COMMANDERY
KNIGHTS TEMPLAR**



**STATE OF ILLINOIS
HEADQUARTERS
OF**

**Richard T. Carnall
Grand Commander**

**5333 7th Ave.
Countryside, Illinois 60525**

**CIRCULAR NO. 1 (Carnall)
GRAND COMMANDER'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE**

Dear Sir Knights of Illinois:

As the Christmas Season approaches our thoughts are drawn out and away from ourselves and our daily trials and tribulations to the Good Tidings of Great Joy brought to us by the Angel of the Lord some two millenniums ago. Our reverence for our Blessed Redeemer inspires in us a spirit of love, hope, and generosity that's reflected in the words of one of my favorite hymns:

**O Come All Ye Faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem. Come and behold Him,
Born the King of Angels; O come, let us adore Him, ... Christ the Lord.**

As Masonic Knights Templar, we are privileged to be joined together in a truly ecumenical association described in our ritual (Order of Malta) as a "Peaceful Christian Society". Our Orders teach many valuable lessons, but we ask for only one true affirmation of faith: "... do you believe that the Savoir died on the Cross for the remission of sin?" Sadly, many of our members have not answered this question as it appears only in the full ceremonial for the Order of Malta.

I'm going to borrow some words from two of the Four Chaplains who perished together on February 3, 1943 (World War II), with the sinking of an army transport ship, The Dorchester, in the cold waters of the North Atlantic. Rabbi Alexander Goode said "The things that unite us (in our faith) are far more fundamental than those that divide us. We can never hope to have absolute uniformity in what we believe. Men will always differ as long as men think. These differences need not lead to hatred or ill will or even the shedding of blood. Let us respect each other, enrich each other, look for the best in each other. Let Christians be truly Christian, and Jews truly Jewish, and let the good and noble of both faiths unite for the realization of common ideals and aspirations, for the glory of God and the redemption of humanity."

Father John Washington, a Catholic priest, added "We have many great fundamental common beliefs. We believe in one God; in God as a personal God; in God as a moral, good God. We believe in social justice and world peace and goodwill. We believe in the future, that the Kingdom of God shall come, and that righteousness shall cover the earth. We also have a common mission, to bring all the people of the world to God, the God and Father of us all. That has been the compelling task of Judaism as well as Christianity.

As Christian Masons may we concentrate on imitating our Lord's gentle and loving example. Let our "militancy" be directed toward our own exercise of the virtues of Faith, Hope, and Charity, remembering that in His Kingdom no sword is drawn but the sword of righteousness, and no strength known but the strength of love. May loving and learning be our purpose for living.

My Lady Becky and I wish you all the joy and warmth of the Season. May your travels be safe, and may the blessings of our Lord Jesus Christ be and remain with each of you throughout the coming year. Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Richard T. Carnall
Grand Commander

