

VOLUME XXVII

• SPRING 2021

• ISSUE 2



THE BYZANTIUM

UNITED GRAND IMPERIAL COUNCIL · RED CROSS OF CONSTANTINE



UNITED GRAND IMPERIAL COUNCIL

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D. Allen Surratt,
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Most Illustrious Grand Sovereign Douglas F. Hegyi, KGC

Dear Knights Companions,

Well, it is 2021. We have a new year and new president, and we have had a few famous deaths, including Hank Aaron of baseball fame and Mary Wilson of the Supremes, plus thousands of others including family, friends, and acquaintances due to the virus. We all still struggle with trying to stay safe from COVID-19.

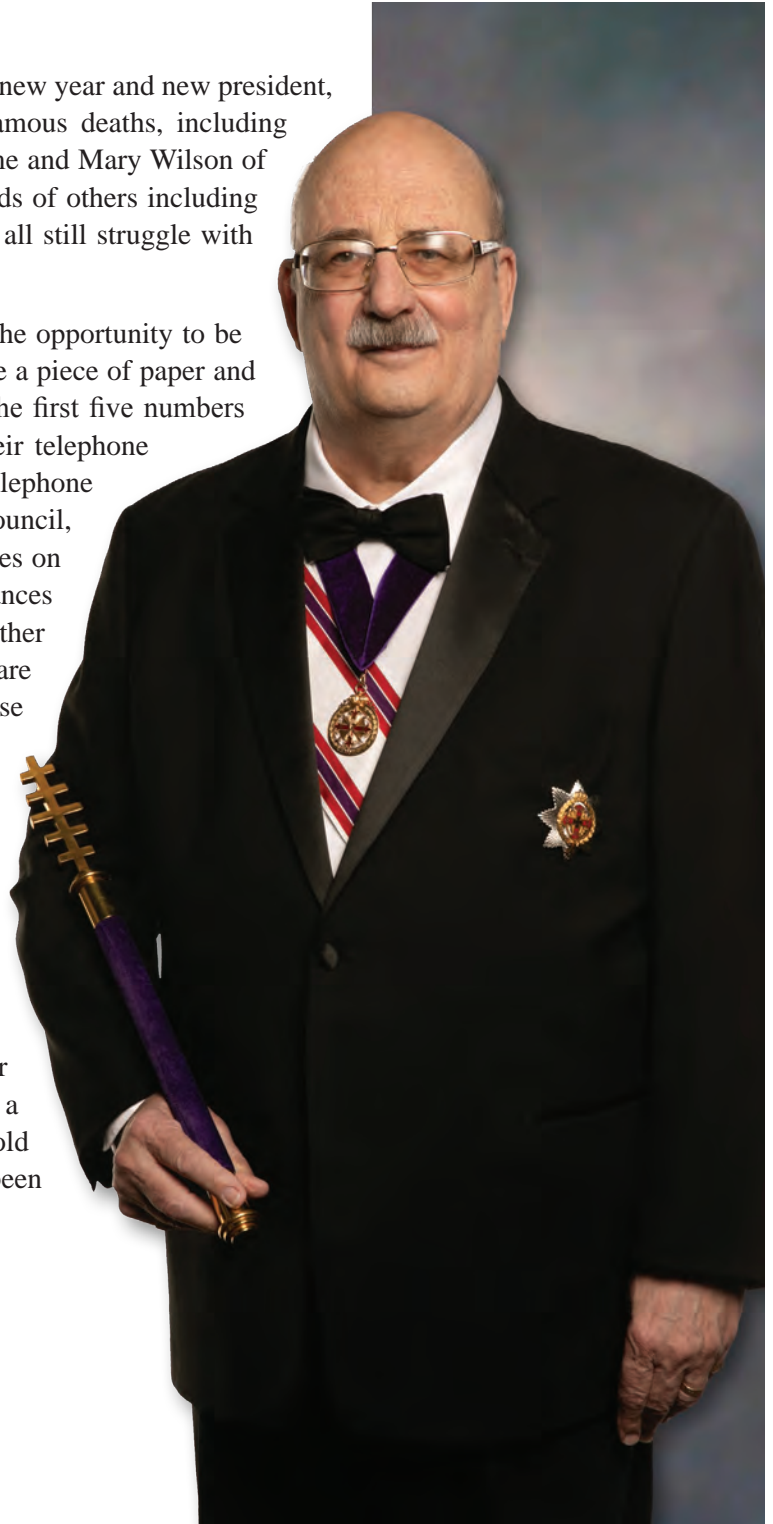
It may seem odd, but our current struggles can give us the opportunity to be closer to our family and friends. I would like you to take a piece of paper and number it 1 through 30 on the left side of the page. The first five numbers are the names of your closest family members with their telephone numbers, and the next twenty-three are the names and telephone numbers of Masonic friends at your Lodge, Chapter, Council, Commandry, Scottish Rite etc. Each of the last two names on your list should be someone who because of circumstances may need a second call during the month, a neighbor whether ten feet or ten miles away or someone who doesn't share your opinion on some important subject. Start calling those on your list. A phone call can brighten your day as well as that of the person whom you call. Perhaps, in these uncertain times those calls can bring us closer together.

Our neighbors may see us dressed in Black Tie at 6:00 in the evening getting in the car heading for a Constantine meeting. They don't realize that we are Masons individually selected for Constantine by our peers. Remember that there are fewer members of the Red Cross of Constantine than there are 33° Masons. Our neighbors see us simply as Masons. To be a Mason is a great privilege and honor so we should do our best to uphold this great fraternity. Let us go forth as Masons who have been selected for that which we have achieved,

ONCE A DAY, EVERY DAY.

Yours in FUZ,

Douglas F. Hegyi, KGC, Grand Sovereign 2020-2021



Easter Reflections

Mark A. Anderson, Intendant General, Division of Minnesota
Spring, 2021

humility (hyoo•mí•li•tee)

noun. 1. humbleness; meekness. 2. a humble condition.
From Latin *humilitas* (as humble) from *humilis* lowly.

Definition from the *Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus American edition, 1996.*

I would venture a guess that when most of us hear or use the word ‘humility’ it refers to definition number 1, above. In addition to meekness, other descriptions could include submissiveness, servility and self-effacement. Probably a picture comes to mind of someone standing with hat in hand, looking bashful.

Should the second definition come to mind, does it conjure up in you a picture of spartan existence, of little means? Perhaps one of lowliness and simplicity? For the peoples of Earth, one could argue the case that we have *all* been brought to a humble condition for over a year, thanks to an insidious virus.

When changing the reference tool to that of a Bible Dictionary, we get a more detailed look at the concept of humility.

From the *HarperCollins Bible Dictionary (1996)*, in part: “humility, in the biblical world a value that directs persons to stay within their inherited social status, specifically by not presuming on others and avoiding even the appearance of lording over another. Humble persons do not threaten or challenge another’s rights, nor do they claim more for themselves than has been duly allotted them in life...for example, the “unworthy” John the Baptist, Mark 1:7.”¹

The life of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, provides an example of humility which cannot be slotted into a narrow definition... he was far more complex than that. Of His birth, from all accounts we may state He came into the world in a most humble condition. When He died He was also in such a state. But, rather than taking His leave in simple meekness, He chose to humiliate Himself, and “avoid the appearance of lording over another.”



Rather than challenging those deemed Authorities, Jesus acted as if He were powerless to save Himself. Being One with God He could have done so, humiliating and shaming those who tried and persecuted Him. This He did *not* want to do, thereby leaving them with honor. Jesus put others first — in sparing shame and dishonor for those who did not recognize Him as Messiah — and also for us the believers in Him by making the ultimate sacrifice, ensuring we would have eternal Life.

Tim Keller said in the December 2008 issue of *Christianity Today* that “We are on slippery ground because humility cannot be attained directly.” He also warns of the “poison of pride,” and the dangers associated with it. To paraphrase: if you *think* you are being humble, you are in reality pride-filled. In true Christian humility we must forget ourselves; we have been saved by the grace of God through Christ, and must serve humankind in His name.

We can never thank Jesus enough for His gift to us. But we can and must try to emulate His example. The Apostle Paul says in his letter to the Ephesians that we should strive for Unity in the Body of Christ... “[I] beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”² Paul also writes in Colossians: “As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience.”³

A quote from Rick Warren (often incorrectly attributed to C.S. Lewis) may have said it best: “Christian humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less.”⁴ Did not Jesus Himself provide us with the most perfect example? Without that perfect example, we would be lost in darkness. Because of that perfect example of humility, Good triumphed over Evil and Christ rose from the dead as proof. Hallelujah!

Finally, Knights Companions: without exception, practice the virtues of Christian humility. And live every day as a celebration of Resurrection day.

Biblical quotes: New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

Updated and corrected for The Byzantium, the first version of this piece was for the Minnesota supplement of the Knight Templar Magazine, April, 2009.

NOTES:

1. HarperCollins Bible Dictionary, p. 443
2. Ephesians 4:1-3
3. Colossians 3:12
4. The Purpose Driven Life: What on Earth Am I Here For?, Day 19: “Cultivating Community”, Zondervan, 2002



149th Annual Assembly: Troy, Michigan

June 3rd-5th, 2021

By R. Stephen Doan, KGC, Grand Recorder

The Grand Sovereign, members of St. Clement Conclave in Detroit and other Knights Companions of the Division of Michigan cordially invite you to attend the 149th UGIC Annual Assembly, to be held on June 3rd to 5th 2021, at the Detroit Marriott Troy, 200 W Big Beaver Road, Troy, Michigan, an affluent suburb sixteen miles north of downtown Detroit. The Assembly schedule and registration material follow.

Business sessions will be held Friday and Saturday mornings, with the traditional Intendants General Seminar opening Friday's activities. All Knights Companions are invited to the seminar. It will include information of interest for all Knights Companions from the Grand Sovereign, Grand Viceroy and Grand Recorder. Information about the transition to the Grand View membership system will be on the agenda.

Friday afternoon will feature a tour of Meadow Brook Hall in Rochester Hills, Michigan. Twenty minutes from the Detroit Marriott Troy, Meadow Brook Hall is a Tudor revival style mansion built between 1926 and 1929 by the widow of one of the Dodge Brothers and her second husband, lumber

baron Alfred Wilson. Covering 88,000 square feet with 110 rooms, the structure is the fourth largest historic mansion museum in America. Much of the original artwork collected by the Wilsons is still found at Meadow Brook. Outdoors, there is the great lawn and sixteen lush gardens to enjoy. The historic garages on the site display the Hall's unique collection of vintage Dodge cars.

Saturday afternoon features a choice of activities. Shuttle buses will be provided from the host hotel to Somerset Collection, a superregional, luxury shopping mall, located five minutes from the hotel with more than 180 specialty stores. Alternatively, Knights Companions may attend conferrals of the three orders of Constantine: Orders of Knights of the Red Cross of Constantine, Holy Sepulchre and St. John the Evangelist.

The weekend will end with the traditional, formal Grand Banquet and entertainment.

We all missed seeing one another in 2020. Be part of what promises to be a fun-filled weekend and celebrate getting out of the house!











**UNITED GRAND IMPERIAL COUNCIL RED CROSS OF CONSTANTINE
149TH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY**

Committee: Stanley O. Simons, General Chairman; Ray Fowler; Corey FGL Curtiss
Stephen Striggow; Jeff Keehn; William LeVeque; Tony Giorgianni; Tim Marshbanks

June 2021

Dear Knight Companion,

The Knights Companions of Michigan anxiously await your participation in the 149th Annual Assembly in Troy, Michigan. Assembly sessions and meals will be offered at the Detroit Marriott Troy. Friday morning will start with the General Assembly, then lunch, after which a tour of Meadow Brook Hall in Rochester will be enjoyed, with dinner at the Hotel that evening. Saturday the Assembly will reconvene, until lunch is served, and in the afternoon Knight Companions can witness the conferral of the Constantinian Orders culminating with the Annual Grand Banquet and Entertainment at the Hotel. The following is the tentative schedule:

Thursday, June 3, 2021

Noon to 5:00 pm	Registration
5:00 pm to 6:00 pm	Long Range Planning Committee
7:00 pm to 8:00 pm	Welcome Reception – Main Ballroom
8:00 pm to Midnight	Hospitality Room
9:00 pm to 11:00 pm	Committee on Finance & Accounts

Friday, June 4, 2021

8:00 am to Noon	Registration
8:30 am to 9:30 am	Recorders and Intendants General Seminar with Grand Sovereign, Grand Viceroy and Grand Recorder
9:30 am to Noon	General Session
Noon to 1:00 pm	Lunch – Ballroom
1:00 pm to 5:00 pm	Tour Meadow Brook Hall in Rochester
6:00 pm to 9:00 pm	Banquet Dinner at the Hotel with Entertainment
9:00 pm to 10:00 pm	Nominating Committee
9:00 pm to Midnight	Hospitality Room

Saturday, June 5, 2021

9:00 am to 10:00 am	General Session
10:00 am to 10:30 am	Memorial Service
10:30 am to 11:30 am	Installation of Officers
Noon to 1:00 pm	Lunch – Ballrooms
1:00 pm to 5:00 pm	Shuttle busses to Somerset Mall on the hr. ½ hr.
1:00 pm to 2:00 pm	Knight of the Red Cross of Constantine
2:00 pm to 3:00 pm	Knight of the Holy Sepulchre
3:00 pm to 4:00 pm	Knight of St. John the Evangelist
5:00 pm to 6:00 pm	Social Hour – Pre-function area – Ballrooms
6:00 pm to 9:00 pm	Annual Grand Banquet and Entertainment
9:00 pm to Midnight	Hospitality Room

The accompanying form should be sent after April 1, 2021. We ask that you make your hotel reservation early to allow us to have a better count of those who plan to attend. We look forward to your attendance and continued Constantinian support.

Yours in Faith, Unity, and Zeal,
Stanley O. Simons, Intendant General

**UNITED GRAND IMPERIAL COUNCIL RED CROSS OF CONSTANTINE
149TH ANNUAL ASSEMBLY**

**JUNE 3-5, 2021
Detroit Marriott Troy
200 W Big Beaver Road
Troy, Michigan 48048**

Reservations: 248-680-9663 (Ask for Lucy Micakaj in Sales)
Group Name: Red Cross of Constantine
Rate for Wednesday through Saturday night: \$110.00 + tax/night
Online Hotel Registration: <https://www.michiganmason.com>
Check-In Time: 3:00 P.M. Check-Out Time: 12:00 Noon

HOTEL RESERVATION DEADLINE IS MAY 12, 2021

Name _____ Lady if attending _____
First and Last First and Last

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Phone _____ E-mail _____

Name & Location of Conclave _____

Conclave Office _____ National Office _____

National Office in Other Masonic Bodies _____

Have you made your lodging reservation with the Detroit Marriott Troy? Yes ___ No ___

Complimentary Parking is provided at the Detroit Marriott Troy Hotel.

I (we) will arrive on _____ I (we) will depart on _____
(date and time) (date and time)

If flying, return transportation to Airport can be provided from Hotel. I (will) (will not) need a ride to Airport.

**REGISTRATION FEE OF \$175.00 PER PERSON INCLUDES FRIDAY LUNCH, TOUR AND FRIDAY BANQUET,
SATURDAY LUNCH, CONFERRAL AND SATURDAY BANQUET.
NUMBER _____ @ \$175 EACH \$ _____**

Select items that you will attend:

Knights	Lady	
		Friday Men's and Ladies' Lunch
		Friday Tour Meadow Brook Hall in Rochester
		Friday Banquet and Entertainment at Hotel
		Saturday Men's and Ladies' Lunch
		Saturday Shuttle Bus to Somerset Mall
		Saturday Annual Grand Banquet and Entertainment

Please identify any Dietary requirements: _____

Check for Registration Fee is payable to the "St. Clement Conclave" and mailed with this completed form to Tim Marshbanks, 907 Monroe, Dearborn, MI 48124-2309.
(Questions? Contact tim@32nddegremasons.org or (734) 751-0776.

DEADLINE TO BE RECEIVED: MAY 1, 2021

NO REFUNDS AFTER MAY 1, 2021

Constantine the Great: A Brief Biographical Sketch

By Knight Companion Michael J. Ramos

On the 27th of February in the year 272 A.D., Flavius Constantius, a native Latin speaking pagan from what is now Bulgaria and an imperial bodyguard in the Roman army who eventually would become one of the four Emperors of the Tetrarchy, and Flavia Julia Helena, a Greek Christian of humble background born in what is now Turkey, welcomed the birth of their son, Flavius Valerius Constantinus – better known to us today as the Emperor Constantine the Great.

As child-heir-apparent to his father's position, Constantine would move from his birthplace in what would now be considered Serbia, to the court of the Emperor Diocletian in Dalmatia where he received, while being more or less held as a hostage, a royal education which introduced him to various literature, ideologies, philosophies and religions.

Constantine served as an outstanding soldier and eventually obtained the rank of a Military Tribune of the First Order; and it is important to note, that this was during a time when Diocletian cast an edict demanding universal persecution of Christians. Whether Constantine himself actually participated in any way to support these orders is unknown.

In 305 A.D., Diocletian resigned his position due to an ongoing illness. Immediately following, Constantius requested Constantine's leave to join him in Roman Britain. One year later, after battling the Picts far beyond Hadrian's Wall, Constantius fell gravely ill. Before his passing he was able to obtain military support to proclaim Constantine full *Augustus*. The proclamation was not at all regular and angered the Emperors in the East. Ultimately, civil war was saved when Constantine acquiesced to the lesser title of Caesar, or Emperor, and thereby obtained the support of his ascension throughout the Empire.

Constantine reigned over Britannia, Gaul and Hispania, and expanded his rule in the northwest via brutal campaigns. Although even during times of war, Constantine was a firm supporter of infrastructure and building projects and held

tolerant policies towards Christians and other religions. We might consider that Constantine was developing into a leader who understood the necessity for both material strength and spiritual harmony.

In 307 A.D., Constantine married Flavia Maxima Fausta, the daughter of Emperor Maximian, which garnered a short-lived reunited alliance between the two families. For in 310 A.D., Maximian would attempt a failed takeover, which induced Constantine to convince him to commit suicide, which was considered a form of leniency. Maximian's most devoted son, Maxentius, after inheriting his father's position as an Emperor, began striking coins and circulating propaganda in an attempt to help save his shamed father's



legacy. In reaction Constantine caused all known images and references to the former Emperor destroyed.

After witnessing Constantine further stabilize his region's support and his own personal popularity via mystical orations concerning the heavenly sanction of his rule, Maxentius would ultimately declare all-out war, which eventually would lead to the Battle of Milvian Bridge on the 28th of October 312 A.D.

This battle, so famously memorialized by Constantine's soldier's shields being marked with the Chi-Rho, would prove quick and brutal, with Maxentius being drowned under the weight of his own slaughtered and fleeing soldiers. The cause of the aforementioned markings has been relayed in various frameworks and themes. Lactantius, an author and advisor to Constantine, recorded that it came to the Emperor in a dream; Eusebius of Nicomedia, biographer and the priest who eventually would baptize Constantine, recorded a much more elaborate vision in which the Emperor saw the cross

made of lights in the heavens, above the sun, and bearing the inscription *In Hoc Signo Vinces*. Additionally, he records that Constantine had a dream the following evening where Jesus Christ told him to make the standard, that we know as the labarum, for when marching into battle, and would thereby know guaranteed victory.

Regardless of how it happened, this battle and recorded vision would ultimately prove as the catalyst for one of the greatest epochs in the history of mankind. In the years that followed, Constantine would spearhead the Edict of Milan, which legalized Christianity – and all religions - throughout the entire Roman Empire, and all but stopped red martyrdom and even saw the return of property and other items which had been seized during previous persecutions. As a patron, he supported the early Church financially. He had basilicas erected, exempted the clergy from certain taxes, and promoted Christians to various offices of prominence. He legislated to make Sunday a day of rest for all citizens, removed Christians from participating in compulsory state animal



sacrifice ceremonies, and was instrumental in attempting to unify the Christian faith through Church Councils.

In the same year he would become sole Emperor of the entire Roman Empire, he found it prudent to create a new Christian capital that would serve the eastern portion of the empire in an even superior position to that of Rome in the west. After various considerations, in 324 A.D., Constantine determined that he would re-christen the city of Byzantium with the name of Constantinople. The city was to serve as an urban epicenter for faith, education and wealth. The Church of the Holy Apostles was erected on the site of a pagan temple, and the art of the old Gods was refurbished to include both Jewish and Christian iconography and symbolism.

In 325 A.D., Constantine held the Council of Nicaea which ultimately produced a version of the Nicene Creed – which to this day is known, repeated, and practiced (in one shape or form) by most mainstream old-world branches of Christianity. In addition, it helped again to root out defined heresies and promote proper practices, provided clearer

separation between the Mosaic Dispensation and that of the Christian faith, the formal use of the Julian Calendar, and the prohibition of Jews owning Christian slaves, etc.

Following his mother Helena’s Holy Land sojourn in 326 or 327 A.D., she and Constantine commissioned the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem to commemorate the birth of Christ, and in Jerusalem the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which encompassed the believed locations of His crucifixion, interment, and resurrection. In Rome, Old Saint Peter’s Basilica was erected on the hill which was said to hold Peter’s grave.

Regardless of all that could be positively contributed to his legacy, Constantine was a man, just as fallible, emotionally reckless and prone to violence as any of his contemporaries in his position. We cannot fairly examine his biography without making mention of how he put his eldest son, Crispus, and wife, Fausta, to death in 326 A.D. To speculate on “why” would ultimately create as many false circumstances as it would questions. Suffice it to say, for all the decisions he



made that ultimately lifted up the Christian religion and its people, we must consider his horrid mistakes as much as we admire his benevolent resolutions.

In the winter of 337 A.D., Constantine became ill. Shortly after Easter of the same year, he was baptized by Eusebius of Nicomedia, the Bishop of the city where he lay near death – never being baptized in the River Jordan as he so desired - and dying shortly after on the 22nd of May, being laid to rest in The Church of the Holy Apostles, with his remains surviving up through the 4th Crusade in the 13th century, but sadly being destroyed at some unknown point afterwards.

Constantine was the second longest running Emperor having ruled for thirty-one years; Caesar Augustus having ruled for forty-one. By the middle ages he was being hailed as a Solomonic figure which rulers should aspire to emulate. His life and works affected continents, countries, cultures, customs, church, state, and the spirit of allegory held within our own beloved Constantinian branch of Chivalric Masonry. False histories and acts attributed to him have been written to glorify his worldly deeds and spiritual insights, as well as to associate him and his kin to the bloodlines of various

monarchs and the lineages of various places and institutions. In his life, Constantine was a living myth; a walking and breathing symbol in the making. In death he would be canonized as a saint within Eastern Orthodox Christianity, and remains venerated by the Eastern Catholic, Lutheran and Anglican traditions. Ultimately, as with all people worth celebrating 1,749 years after their birth, he is as equally controversial as he is cherished.



Knight Companion Michael J. Ramos is a member of St. Francis Conclave in San Francisco, California. He joined Constantine in 2019. He is a Past Master of Crow Canyon Lodge No. 551 and Templum Rosae Lodge No. 863. Inspired by the eighteenth-century Freemasons of England known as the ‘Antients’, the Brethren of Templum Rosae share a belief that a Mason’s journey culminates in the august Degree of the Holy Royal Arch. He is the Lodge Development Manager for the Grand Lodge of California.



THE UNITED GRAND IMPERIAL COUNCIL OF KNIGHTS OF THE

RED CROSS OF CONSTANTINE AND APPENDANT ORDERS

FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, MEXICO, AND THE PHILIPPINES



FIDELITAS UNITAS ET FERVOR

March 16, 1972

Mr. C. H. Barr
404 Richmond Avenue
Dayton, Ohio 45406

Dear Knight Companion Barr:

There is no ruling by the Committee on Ritual regarding the pronunciation of Constantine.

As you know, it was the practice in the old Empire of the East to pronounce it as "teen," while the Empire of the West generally followed the practice of pronouncing the name to rhyme with Valentine.


Unfortunately, both pronunciations are listed in the dictionaries, as you know, and to further compound the issue Webster's New International Dictionary lists "tine" as first choice and "teen" as second. However, I also have a Columbia University Encyclopedia at the office which reverses the choices, placing "teen" first.

Back approximately 40 years ago, Ray Denslow, then Grand Sovereign, Empire of the West, issued a directive that the pronunciation should be "tine," not "teen."

There it stands. Might be a good subject for discussion at Kansas City during the Centennial Assembly of the United Grand Imperial Council. Perhaps we need to have an official edict by the Grand Sovereign but, in the meantime, it seems to be a matter of geography and preference. My own particular problem is that I have a Pennsylvania background and have a natural tendency to pronounce it with the "teen" sound. But, being in Illinois, and to avoid sounding like a foreigner, I have forced myself to give it the long "i" sound.

Best wishes.

Sincerely,
In Faith, Unity and Zeal,


Paul C. Rodenhauser
Grand Recorder

PCR:mb
PAUL C. RODENHAUSER, GRAND RECORDER 14 EAST JACKSON BLVD., SUITE 1733
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60604 (TEL. AC 312 427-5670)

St. Bernard Installation



Although 2020 as a very trying year, the officers and members of St. Bernard are continuing to meet when allowed and our Conclave is still strong. Congratulations to Past Puissant Sovereign Edward Anderson for his leadership in 2020, and best of luck to new Puissant Sovereign James King for a successful year in 2021.

St. Bernard Conclave of Kentucky is stationed in Madisonville. It was chartered on June 4, 1993 and is one of two conclaves in that state. It is not to be confused with St. Bernard Conclave of Mobile, Alabama nor with St. Bernard de Clairvaux Conclave in Fort Myers, Florida.

Pictured Below:

The newly elected 2021 officers of St. Bernard Conclave of Kentucky

From far left to right: Robert Stanford, PS; Gary Hunt; James King, Puissant Sovereign; Greg Raque; Mack Scott; George Arnold; Jon Grantham; Ron Dockery; Charles Durham; Bruce Outlaw; David Puckett; Edward Anderson, PS; Bill Riggs, PS. *Note that masks were removed for the picture!*



Ignē Natura Renovatur Intēgra

Fire regenerates us. It is the lesson to be drawn from the Rosicrucian INRI, a cabalistic word for the phrase in Latin, *Ignē Natura Renovatur Intēgra*: by fire nature is perfectly renewed. One contemporary Christian theologian predicts the ultimate regenerative fire at the moment of death:

Some recent theologians are of the opinion that the fire which both burns and saves is Christ Himself, the Judge and Savior. The encounter with Him is the decisive act of judgment. Before His gaze all falsehood melts away. This encounter with Him, as it burns us, transforms and frees us, allows us to become truly ourselves.

Christ's unconditional love is truly the gateway to eternity with the Father.



The images on these pages are from the ceiling of Cappella Sansevero in Naples, Italy, both an expansion view and then a more detailed look at its center. The ceiling is named the *Glory of Paradise*, which we hope to reach after Final Judgment. Its center reveals the essence of the Divine, symbolized by a white dove of peace and harmony with an equilateral triangle over the bird's head, representing our Christian understanding of the Triune Nature of the Divine. Cappella Sansevero is filled with alchemical and Masonic symbolism. It is not to be missed if you find yourself in Naples.



San Lorenzo Conclave, Panama



This photo was taken at the February 9, 2021 installation of San Lorenzo's incoming Sovereign Francisco Flores and Viceroy Juan Carlos Cedeño. At the far left is Knight Companion John Bernard Bamber, Intendant General for the Division of Panama and a Past District Grand Master of the District Grand Lodge at the Panama Canal, and to his immediate left (the viewer's right) Knight Companion Marcos D. Ostrander, the Very Illustrious Grand Senior General of the United Grand Imperial Council and a Past Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Panamá. Next is Most Worshipful Lictor Reyna, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Panamá. To his left are Francisco Flores (Sovereign), Juan Carlos Cedeño (Viceroy), Ruben Levy (Past Sovereign) and Rafael Cedeño (Past Sovereign).

Attendance was limited due to the COVID 19 restrictions.

San Lorenzo Conclave was chartered on June 2, 1934 and stationed at Ancon in what was then the Canal Zone. Charles C. Cameron was its first member and the first Intendant General. The other charter members were R. E. Bassler, L. B. Bates, G. D. Bliss, E. F. Bramin, C. P. Campbell, J. C. Claybourn, H. W. Gerrans, D. B. Iseley, J. E. Jacob, W. M. James, T. M. Jordan, L. W. Lewis, W. P. Quinn, R. P. Reeder, G. H. Steel, R. G. Taylor and R. T. Zane. Fort San Lorenzo was a key fortification along the Atlantic Ocean side of the Isthmus of Panama.



Binding Tie

The following image comes to us courtesy of Knight Companion James A. Marples, a member of St. David Conclave in Salina, Kansas:

Jim writes:

Interestingly, “The Binding Tie” cigar was a good cigar but it fulfilled a niche market among collectors who catered to the unique artwork. “The Binding Tie” cigar box was imagery printed by O.L. Schwencke in New York. This label was printed between 1887 and 1908 and depicts a Masonic Temple with altar wrapped in red velvet illuminated by candlelight. The altar holds a Holy Bible and the Square and Compass symbolic of peace and harmony. It also has an evergreen Wreath, a slipper, and the ‘keystone’ emblem of the Royal Arch. The All-Seeing Eye is the centerpiece denoting that the power of the Great Architect is omnipotent, omnipresent and watching over all of us. My Great Grandfather George White, 33° and a Knight Templar, had one of “The Binding Tie” cigar boxes which he bought at Phillipsburg, Kansas, in the year 1903, the year his youngest son Raymond George White was born. My family still owned it when it was destroyed in a house fire at Agra, Kansas, in the year 1920.



In small type under the image is the name of the lithographer who printed it: O.L. Schwencke Litho., NYC. In 1885, Oscar L. Schwencke and Henry Pfitzmayer founded one of the nation’s more important lithographic companies. In 1887, Schwencke & Pfitzmayer became O.L. Schwencke Litho., NYC, the company name on the above image. The company moved from New York City to Brooklyn in about 1902 and became Moehle Litho in 1908. The company closed in 1930.

With 40 percent of the country’s entire 1890 cigar output manufactured in three square miles of tenement factories on the Lower East Side of New York, it is no surprise that nearly all important label printers were located in that neighborhood, including O.L. Schwencke.

There are thousands of cigar box labels attributed to O.L. Schwencke Litho., NYC. We have not been able to find out if he were a Mason, but clearly the altar as arranged and displayed in the above image would have been familiar to New York Masons buying these cigars. Besides what Knight Companion Jim identified in the image, note the second keystone, the one on the left with the square and compass on it. Note also the Forget Me Not next to the trowel.

You can now buy on the internet reproductions of the Binding Tie image, framed or suitable for framing, as well as printed on shirts, serving trays and any manner of other objects. The Binding Tie still resonates! But, take yourself back to say 1900. Imagine how the intensity of feeling anticipating a cigar after dinner was deepened as the Mason reaching for his after dinner smoke encountered the above image as he opened the box, reminding him of the mystic tie binding him to his brethren whithersoever dispersed.

Inside Cover Images

The two coins on the inside cover are the obverse and reverse of a follis of Constantine the Great from about 337 C.E. Constantine is depicted on the obverse. The reverse depicts his labarum spearing a serpent. The inscription reads SPES PVBLICA [Hope for the People]. The speared serpent appears to be dead, perhaps symbolizing Constantine's victory over evil, which could have been interpreted at the time as his 324 C.E. victory over Licinius I, Constantine's former co-regent.



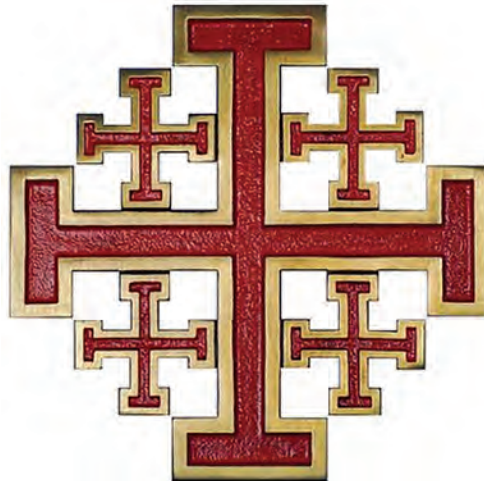
The labarum (Greek: λάβαρον) was a vexillum (military standard) that displayed the “Chi-Rho” symbol Ϟ, a christogram formed from the first two Greek letters of the word “Christ” (Greek: ΧΡΙΣΤΟΣ, or Χριστός) — Chi (χ) and Rho (ρ). It was first used by Constantine as the Roman emperor.

The medallion below is of Constantine's labarum, with a wreathed Chi-Rho, from an antique silver medal. We know from our ritual that the images of the three people are of Constantine and his children.

Behold the Jerusalem Cross

By George E. Weil, Arizona Conclave

The Jerusalem Cross is rich in symbolism and meaning and goes by many different names. The Jerusalem cross consists of a large center cross with four smaller Greek crosses (a cross with four equal arms, similar to a plus sign) in each quadrant. Also known as the Crusader cross, the Jerusalem cross dates back to the 11th and 12th centuries when the Crusaders captured Jerusalem in 1099, establishing Christianity in the area. (At that time, Muslim forces controlled the area). One of the leaders of the Crusades, Godfrey de Bouillon, was the first to use the Jerusalem Cross as a distinct symbol of the new Crusader state, known as the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem. De Bouillon



believed that the cross symbolized Jesus Christ and the city of Jerusalem which is the root of Christianity. Even after the overthrow of the Crusader state in 1291, the cross remained a symbol of Jerusalem for Christians and became the emblem of the esteemed Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem.¹

The Crusaders cross is also sometimes referred to as the New Jerusalem Cross, focusing attention on the Divine and heavenly restoration of Jerusalem. New Jerusalem occurs

twice in the New Testament. The Jerusalem Cross is sometimes confused with the Teutonic Cross, assigned by Pope Innocent III to the Teutonic Knights near the end of the 12th century. It can also be confused with St. Julian's Cross.²

Today, the Jerusalem cross remains the emblem of the Order, and is still the symbol of all those who work to preserve Christianity in Jerusalem. The Jerusalem cross is believed to represent several things. Historians note that the four crosses surrounding the large center cross represent the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The four crosses also are believed to represent the four corners of the earth, in which Jesus desired His word to be proclaimed by His disciples. The large cross symbolizes Christ. Other historians believe that the five crosses together symbolize the five wounds Jesus suffered on the cross. The four small crosses represent the four wounds of Jesus' hands and feet, while the large cross signifies Jesus' pierced heart.³

NOTES:

1. See holylandtreasuresonline.com for further information. Article is entitled "The History and Meaning of the Jerusalem Cross, or the Crusaders Cross."
2. See Catholicfaithstore.com for further information. Article is entitled "The History and Significance of the Jerusalem Cross."
3. Same as endnote No. 1





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