



Greetings Sir Knights,

The election season is now past, we have a vaccine for COVID-19, the year 2020 is over and we can see a light at the end of the tunnel -- we just don't know how long the tunnel is! One of my many frustrations with 2020 was the difficulty in separating the truth from the chaff in our Government's briefings!

I have long known one of the virtues of Masonry and Knights Templar to be truth, I understand truth. As a child I was taught to always tell the truth so I would never have to remember what I said -- the truth is always the truth. In the Holy Bible, John 8:32, we read: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." I always trust a Knight Templar to tell me the truth and rarely have I been disappointed.

As a 19-year-old college student I attended classes at night and worked an 8-hour job during the day. My class had about 15 men around my age and we all considered ourselves as "street smart." My professor was a retired lawyer who had over 80 years of life experience. We guys took great pleasure in distracting him from "teaching" by getting him to tell us "stories" so we would not have to discuss the class subject. Years later, reflecting back on my college years, I now realize that I learned far more from this "old" professor and his "stories" than I ever did from a class book. His life stories revolved around the truth and how to find it! The Professor said, "never trust anyone who is trying to sell you something." Remember they are trying to get you to buy something you probably do not want or need. Look for the truth." This advice has served me well in life!

I love historical research, and this led me to study the importance of numbers in understanding Christian and Templar teachings. Numbers affect our daily lives, yet we may not think about their deeper meaning. You have probably heard that "numbers don't lie;" does that mean numbers are the foundation of truth and mean numbers could be the language of the Universe? Throughout history, man has searched for truth. The ancient Greek studies on truth are still important reading today. The ancient Romans even had a Goddess of Truth - VERITAS. Is there a connection between truth and 12?

Recently, while reorganizing my office I came across my very first Knights Templar Magazine which I received in August 2012 and was surprised to find that the Illinois Supplement that month was about truth! I consider the Grand Commander at the time a true friend and mentor and we have enjoyed a few philosophical discussions about life but never specifically about VERITAS. I found the author's summary of the congruence theory (argued by Aristotle and Socrates) to be concise, "Truth is an accurate statement of what is reality." Of course, reality is problematic since it depends on whose definition we use! Thus, I

believe facts and truth sometimes get separated from reality. For example, in the Grammy Award-winning-song-lyrics of K. Loggins & M. McDonald, they wrote "What a fool believes he sees, no wise man has the power to reason away. What seems to be is always better than nothing." But even in a fool's reality, facts prove truths and once proven, truth never changes.

Are numbers the language of truth? Pythagoras certainly believed it to be so! The original Knights Templar used their extensive knowledge of numbers in constructing buildings that remain standing today! As we modern Templars go about our daily lives, are we aware of how/why our forefathers incorporated the number 12 in our Fraternity's founding structure & documents? Is there an ancient code in the use of number 12 that we are overlooking?

Long ago I read about King Arthur and the 12 Knights of the Round Table. When I became a Knight Templar in 2012 I was surprised to find our Commandery stations inside an asylum require 12 Knights Templar! Is there a connection? I am also fascinated by how the number 12 was incorporated into prehistoric stone structures whose meaning we still do not understand. What is the meaning of 12?

What does the number 12 have to do with truth and the language of the universe? I encourage you to do your own research. The History Channel has an excellent episode of Ancient Aliens titled "The Divine Number" (Season 15, Episode 13) and if you have access to this show you will find it enlightening.

My quest for why 12 is important reveals other interesting facts:

- Jesus had 12 Apostles? Read Acts 1:23 and Acts 1:26. When Judas betrayed Jesus, why was it critical to elect another to maintain the number at 12?
- Jesus was 12 years old when he was left behind in the temple. When he was found, he was among the religious leaders seeking truth (Luke 2:42, 49-52).
- Jesus raised Jarius' 12-year-old daughter from a comma (Mark 5:42).
- Jesus' miraculous multiplication of 5 bread loaves and 2 fishes fed thousands and provided 12 baskets of leftovers (Matthew 14:19-20; John 6:13). Why 12?
- Jacob had 12 sons which became the 12 Tribes of Israel.
- According to Revelation 12:12, the New Jerusalem will have the names of the 12 disciples on the foundation of the 12 walls.
- There are 12 angels guarding the 12 heavenly gates (Revelation 21:12).
- Why was the Christian calendar divided into 12 months?
- Why are there 12 inches in a foot measurement?
- Why are there 12 major scales in music? Is music a universal language?
- Why are there 12 buttons on the front of a Templar Dress uniform coat?
- Why did the ancient Sumerians group the stars into 12 Zodiac constellations (known as The Pantheon of Twelve)?

You can see that these extended "stay at home orders" are perhaps giving me too much spare time to ponder mysteries! Did you look for the truth in the 12 facts above? Find the "untruth." There may be an open-book test on these mysteries at the next Annual Conclave. Stay safe and read.

Cheers!

AUSTON EUGENE SMITH, GRAND COMMANDER