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Greetings and Blessings Sir Knights!

What a wonderful time of the year. Our bellies are full, we have just finished the Thanksgiving celebration across this beautiful country of ours, the air has a hint of chill in it, and Christmas lights are beginning to show up all over.

My wife Lady Kandi and I hope you had a great Thanksgiving with family and friends.

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior in the Christian Community, we welcome all of those of other religions as they celebrate their own change of seasons and special remembrances.

This year we are preparing for a number of events. All of our Commanderies are planning to celebrate the season with a Christmas Observance! This is the first time in memory that I can recall each of them setting up this annual ritual and celebration. For dates and detailed information please check out the EVENTS section of the Grand Commandery website. You can find this at - yorkritemaryland.org –

Congratulations to Grand Prelate Charles Beckhardt for the hard work he has done to provide the commanderies with the proper tools and information to set up these special observances.

If you have never attended one, please check the calendar for one near you and partake of this opportunity. Charles and his team of Prelates have been working diligently to inform and encourage the Christian observances and a calendar of important dates. This can also be found on the EVENTS page and is a work in progress.

The season of merriment will kick off on Sunday Dec. 4th for our Sir Knights as we march alongside our new Most Worshipful Grand Master and Past Grand Commander Fred Spicer and his line of officers at the annual Mayors Parade in Hamden. Join us if you can. You can see the particulars for this event on the website as well under EVENTS. Uniforms are helpful but if you

do not have one and wish to March, please do so. Black suit and Malta jewel at the very least for this. Dress warmly.

This year as a special treat we will be accompanied by Sir Knights from Monumental Crusade Commandery # 3 on Horseback and in Medieval Templar Regalia! This should be a fine display and bring much recognition and joy our way.

We offer very warm Congratulations to MWGM Spicer and his new line of officers in the Grand Lodge of Maryland. The outgoing Grand Master Marlin Mills is to be congratulated upon his years of service and incoming Grand Master Fred deserves our diligent attention to his plans for the craft. The Knights Templars offer our support and respect as he undertakes the most demanding job of guiding the Masons of Maryland for the next 2 years.

Stay tuned for other important EVENTS coming up as we prepare for a major celebration coming up with the 100th Anniversary of the Cornerstone laying at the George Washington Masonic National Memorial in February in Alexandria Va. We'll flesh out the details but be aware that another marching opportunity awaits us all on February 20th followed by the rededication of the Cornerstone at the Memorial.

Your Grand Commandery is still at work. Recently I had the opportunity to join REPGC Charles Warns II and Eminent Commander (Monumental Crusade #3) to present checks to one of our local charities. The Little Sisters of the Poor in Catonsville Md. does wonderful work in giving care to elderly persons of little or no means. Where otherwise these older folks would be cast upon the streets, The Little Sisters take them in and provide permanent housing and care. Past Grand Commander Warns made us aware of this wonderful group of women a couple of years ago. When he was our Grand Commander and during our 150th anniversary year we began to sell the 150th commemorative coins and Malta jewels. These funds were earmarked for the Nuns and their good work. After nearly two years we have compiled \$1500 by your generosity. In addition, MC#3 recently matched those funds and PGC Chuck added his own check, so we were able to present a sizable donation (\$3500) for this effort.

We will continue to sell the coins and Malta jewels as long as they last, and those funds will be targeted to this Charity. Your personal donations are welcome as well.

Charity and Philanthropy are the hallmarks of Freemasonry. Charity is one of the fundamental aspects of the Knights Templar philosophy and is inculcated in every one of our Orders. As we enter the Christmas season the opportunities abound to assist our neighbors. I don't have to tell you this, the need is obvious every time you exit your home or watch the news. Use your wealth such as it is, and spare time, to put a smile on someone's face or food on the table as a part of your regular activity. This time of year, we are reminded of the need of others around the world. If you could bottle the generosity of spirit that accompanies the season and open it to dab some on your soul everyday what a refreshing life we could lead. As Knights Templars, we have that opportunity to daily remember our oaths and lessons. I wish each of you this spirit of generosity for the holiday season as well as through the year. During your seasonal travels in Lodges and other Masonic organizations, do your best to loosen those purse strings in the meetings to cast upon the community the excess of our Masonic endeavors.

Lady Kandi and I will be traveling in the coming weeks to as many of the Christmas Observances as we can. We hope to see many of you at these gatherings as we commune together to renew our faith and remember the birth of our Savior. The yearly rituals of celebration of the Son of God renew our spirits and brighten our lives in a time when nature brings on darkness as the days shorten. Enjoy these rituals of renewal and joy as we welcome our neighbors and friends, Brothers and Sisters to join us in the events of our communities.

What a wonderful tradition of sights, sounds and smells that greet us as we travel the streets and visit our places of worship. All of our senses are keyed up as this yearly tribute is woven for our enjoyment.

The annual York Rite Christmas service for the Masonic Homes at Bonnie Blink are to be celebrated in the Chapel on the hill on Sunday December 18th at 3:00 PM. All are welcome. Please join us if you can.

May the spirit of the season fill you with awe and wonder, may your children and your children's children be safe and happy, may your friends and family be uplifted by your very presence and dedication as we celebrate the birth of the Son of God.

God Bless you each

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