



Grand Commandery of Michigan

"Together, for a Better Tomorrow"

Gary L. Paquet, Right Eminent Grand Commander

Sir Knights and Ladies:

November is a time for reflection, giving thanks, and counting the many blessings bestowed upon each of us. At least, that is what we normally do. But these are not normal times, are they?

In this time of Covid, I'm sure many may not have this thinking of blessings and giving thanks on the forefront of their mind. I certainly cannot blame you and to minimize the difficulty of the last 20 months would be irresponsible of me. It has been a difficult time. I'm sure all who are reading this right now know of someone who became ill, maybe even yourself, and for others, you know of someone who passed away. It may have been because of the virus, another illness or from a full life. I am not immune to this loss. I lost my mother this year. There is not a day that goes by that I do not think of her. However, now that time has marched on, I can reflect on the blessing that I had her in my life as long as I did. I know there are many who were not as fortunate as me, so I will consider myself blessed.



A few days ago, I had the privilege to be part of the banquet for the officers and families of the York Rite of Masonry. I had the opportunity to speak, a task of which I do not particularly feel comfortable with, but one that does go with the territory. In it, I reflected on the act of holding the banquet. Over the years, I have heard a growing chorus of individuals who bemoan having to attend this. Do we really need to have these dinners? I would argue, yes! And I say so for this reason. We just found out how life as we know it can change in an instant. We were going on our merry way, doing our thing and boom, it all came to a screeching halt. For several months we were isolated from each other. It goes against our general nature as human beings and certainly within our fraternity to not be around our family and friends or our brothers and sisters. Something as simple as human interaction ended and Masonry as we have come to define it through our meetings, ended.

November Birthdays of Grand Officers and Ladies: The happiest of birthdays to each of you!

12th-Lady Linda Murphy
17th-S.K. Tommy Amidon
21st-Lady Beverly Bladen
21st-S.K. William Herlihy
22nd-S.K. Lloyd Darling
23rd-S.K. Adam Wygant

These dinners, while they are an opportunity to say thank you to the officers for their service, are symbolic of something deeper and much more lasting. Its an opportunity to give a handshake, receive a hug, catch up on what's going on in each other's lives, tell stories and reminisce. It's a time to meet new people, rekindle friendships and build one of our tenants, brotherly love and friendship. Without opportunities like this, I feel we would be depriving ourselves of one of our foundational ideals of what it means to be a Mason and part of a fraternity.

At this dinner, I also reiterated what the responsibilities of a Grand officer are. It is not an option to not visit each of our

respective Chapters, Councils and Commanderies. It's not an option to not visit our sister jurisdictions. It's not an option to not go to functions within our own organization, specifically Commandery, but also to those across the whole of Masonry. This is where we are introduced to new brothers and sisters, develop new ideas and programming, build relationships, and make life-long friends. Without partaking in the foundations of our fraternity, we are depriving ourselves of the riches of what it means to be a Mason.

Some of my dearest friends are those who I would not have met had I not become involved in Masonry. I would not know most of you had I not soted "further light in Masonry," visited sister jurisdictions or gone to visit those Chapters, Councils and Commanderies throughout the state. My life would not be as full, enriched and blessed had I not continued my journey in Masonry. These dinners provide a forum to strengthen that bond. Seeing and speaking to you feeds my soul and recharges my battery to do more for you. I don't know if it does the same for you, but I certainly hope on some level it does.

I use these examples from my experience to remind all that we need to look beyond our immediate situation or just the surface of our day-to-day activities. Life is not always easy. There will be difficult times. There are things we have control over and others, not. However, never lose sight of the blessings around us, especially those that may not be so obvious. So, to all those who say these are unprecedented times and "not normal," I say, look again.

If you are blessed to be with family or friends this Thanksgiving, give an extra little squeeze of the hand as you gather around the dinner table to say grace. Let your eyes linger for just a moment longer onto the face of those you speak with. Capture the love of those present and reminisce on those who are no longer able to be with you but remain in your heart. If you do, the difficulty of the last 20 months and before will fade just a bit. You will clearly see the blessings around you and for the abundance of things to be thankful for.

Until our paths cross again, safe travels to wherever the journey takes you!

Sir Knight Gary L. Paquet, PC, KYGCH
 Right Eminent Grand Commander
 Knights Templar of Michigan

November Inspections –	
For a full list of inspections and details go to KT-MI.ORG	
10/6	Joint Inspection Marshall No. 17 and Battle Creek No. 33 in Battle Creek Full Inspection
10/9	Pontiac No. 2 Regular Conclave evening-No Order of the Temple or dinner
10/12	DeMolai 5 Regular Conclave evening-No Order of the Temple or dinner
10/13	Joint Inspection Adrian No. 4 and Jackson No. 9 Full Inspection
10/13	Northville No. 39 Full Inspection
10/13	St. Bernard No. 16 Full Inspection
10/20	Mt. Clemens No. 51 Full Inspection





Thanksgiving! It calls to mind many things: the family all together, The parades on TV, Football, The smells of dinner cooking, and finally, that meal, with Turkey and all the fixings. Certainly, all these things go together special memory of Thanksgiving.

But there is so much more. History tells us that about only half of the Colonists survived that first new world winter of 1620-21. History also tells us that following year with the help of indigenous Native Americans they had a successful season, and in November of 1621, organized a 3-day celebration of their harvest. Ironically, a few years later, in 1623, Governor Bradford called for a "religious" fast to note the end of a lengthy drought which threatened the colonies crops.

Historically, then, a thanksgiving celebration continued until President Lincoln formally designated the fourth Thursday in November as a day of Thanksgiving.

It is no great leap to suggest that the truest form of worship is thanksgiving. As we celebrate our holiday, it clear that we are not our own, goodness and greatness come from our creator. Consider then, the words of the 100th Psalm:

Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the Earth!
Serve the Lord with gladness!
 Come into his presence with Singing!
Know that the Lord, he is God!
 It is he who made us, and we are his!
 we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.
Enter his gates with thanksgiving,
 and his courts with praise!
For the lord is good:
 his steadfast love endures forever,
 and his faithfulness to all generations.

As we approach this Thanksgiving, we can join our forebearers. Giving thanks for the dawn of brighter tomorrows and beyond. We can and should worship with joy and thanksgiving, "for the Lord is good: His steadfast love endures." Let us give thanks with grateful hearts.

Sir Knight David Dossette, PC, KYGCH
Eminent Grand Prelate