



# Tennessee Knight Templar News

Robert B. Beam, Grand Commander

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## East Tennessee Knight Templar Degree Team

Pictured Above - Sir Knights from the East Tennessee Knight Templar Degree Team conferred an Entered Apprentice Degree at French Broad Lodge No. 588 on April 17th.

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Pictured Right - Robert B. Beam, Grand Commander and First Lady Sharon Beam attending Indiana Grand Commandery Session



## Events and Recognitions



From Left to Right - Eminent Grand Warder Kevin Boles, REPGC Clarence Crump, Eminent Grand Captain General Tim Sutton, and Right Eminent Grand Commander Robbie Beam attending the Indiana Grand Commandery Session

Right Eminent Grand Commander Philip Wisner of Indiana (Middle), and Right Eminent Grand Commander Robbie Beam (Right)







Pictured Left - York Rite float that Paris Commandery entered into the Paris Fish Fry Parade!



Pictured Right - Paris Commandery No. 16 Representing TN York Rite at the Paris Fish Fry Parade!



Reverend Jason Mikel, Pastor of the Jenkins Cumberland Presbyterian Church in Nolensville, TN, experienced the Knight Templar Holy Land Pilgrimage in February. He was the speaker at the De Payens Commandery #11 Easter Observance on Saturday, April 8.

Reverend Mikel assured those present that “your mission is absolutely correct,” that mission being the HLP Mission of sending Pastors to the Holy Land. He said the Pilgrimage was “life changing.” He informed us that prior to the Pilgrimage he had had two or three of the “big moments” on his Christian journey—and that in the Holy Land, he had three more: 1) taking communion on the steps leading to the Temple gate—those steps being the one place where it is almost certain that Jesus walked—and taking that communion with his fellow Pilgrimage Tour Pastors who were from the whole spectrum of Christian denominations; 2) the Holocaust Memorial—being hit with the questions of how do we live together, how do we avoid casting our brothers and sisters into the role of “other” (this surprised him—he did not expect the Holocaust Memorial to affect him as deeply as it did); 3) the Mount of Olives, where he imagined what Jesus experienced before He entered Jerusalem to usher in the new Kingdom.

Before the Pilgrimage, Reverend Mikel had anticipated coming to the Mount of Olives during his tour. He imagined Jesus looking at the Temple just across the narrow Valley of Kedron. In Reverend Mikel’s theology, the Kingdom is a part of us—we who believe in Christ and feel His presence carry the Kingdom inside of us. As he climbed the Mount of Olives, Reverend Mikel imagined Jesus anticipating what He was about to do in the Name of the Lord—bring in the Kingdom of God. Sitting in prayer and meditation on that Mount, Reverend Mikel was hit with one of the peak experiences of his Christian Journey—an inner voice asking him “Jason, what will YOU do in the name of the Lord?” Reverend Mikel shared that he does not yet know the answer to that question, but he definitely knows WHERE he heard the question. And he thanked De Payens Commandery for sponsoring his pilgrimage and making this peak experience possible.

Reverend Mikel, in his Easter message to us which was based on Mark 16:1-8, observed that Jesus gives us the change we need, not the change we want. We must be open to and ready for change. We must have an open heart and be able to feel the hurt of others. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary experienced unexpected change when they found the Empty Tomb and saw Jesus. The Empty Tomb shows us that we are on a journey of change. With open hearts, we can help be the change for others. Easter, Reverend Mikel asserts, is about preparing ourselves for those unexpected changes that life will set before us.

Note: Reverend Mikel speaks about the places in Jerusalem, with pictures, that pertain to the arrest and crucifixion of Jesus during this [YouTube video](#) of his Church Bible Study, “The Way of the Cross”:

The presentation begins at the fourth minute of the video, the presentation of specific locations begins at the 20th minute. His Church website is <https://jenkinscp.org/>



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## The Third Fundamental Characteristic of a Templar, Excellence

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Last month we discussed the concept of **Selflessness**, the second of the four indispensable characteristics of a Templar; Character, Selflessness, Excellence, and Engagement. This month we will take a look at the vital Templar trait of **Excellence**.

The world embraces mediocrity. After all, achieving mediocrity involves very little effort, and the results are usually accepted as the norm. The truth is that mediocrity never advances science, prosperity, liberty, fraternity, or the human condition. As a matter of fact, most of those who embrace mediocrity resent those who strive for excellence, even though they, themselves, often benefit from those who achieve excellence. I guess they are basing their self esteem on a comparison of their achievements with the achievements of those who consistently strive for excellence. We should be brave enough never to let this resentment dissuade us from a constant pursuit of excellence. Excellence in everything.

Sad to say, but mediocrity has infected Templary in Tennessee. The initiatory experience we currently offer our new members generally takes place outside our asylums, because it is more convenient to send our candidates to a festival than to confer the orders ourselves. This is less than excellent in several ways.

First, many candidates never ever darken the doors of our asylums after they receive the Order of the Temple at a festival. Many don't even know where or when their own Commandery meets. They sometimes don't even know who else is a member of their Commandery. After all, most of them didn't attend the festival, and they have never had the opportunity to meet their own new members. Many new members are not even invited to attend their first Commandery meeting. For many, their first contact from their Commandery is a demand for dues.



Second, they are crammed in with a number of other brethren who they may not know, as simply an observer of a ceremony conferred upon someone else. Sir Knights, no matter how impressive the Order of the Temple ceremony is, it is not the same if you are not the sole candidate and actively involved in every part of the conferral. It is a travesty to take an experience as profound and meaningful as the Order of the Temple and turn it into a spectator side show. This destroys the personal experience for a candidate. No wonder so many of them never come back. They were never engaged to begin with.

This is not excellence, but neither do we provide an excellent Templar experience at our stated meetings. We should constantly strive for a superior experience in every facet of our Templar experience. Our normal business meeting is BORING! We seem to strive for mediocrity in our dining experience, our religious observances, our charitable activities, and every other aspect of our Commandery programs.

We cannot expect our Knights to achieve Excellence in their own chivalric lives if we settle for mediocrity in our communal activities. We need to start, now, raising the bar so that every Templar experience becomes a superior one. This will be neither easy nor cheap. This mediocrity is repelling our new members, and if our current trends persist concerning our number of members and the percent who attend Commandery functions doesn't improve, most of our Commanderies will be unable to meet within the next year or two.

This will deprive future Brethren who aspire to be Templars from ever having the opportunity to experience the truly superior chivalric experience Templary should be offering.

The answer is to bring the principle of **excellence in everything** back into our Commanderies. Corporate excellence is the result of individual excellence on the part of every Knight. Each of us should be contributing to the achievement of a superior Templar experience for each other.

Sir Knights, if you are not currently active in your Commanderies, you are part of the problem, not a victim of it. It is as much your responsibility as it is the responsibility of your Commandery officers to see excellence reintroduced into Templary in Tennessee. Call your officers up, and see what you can do to help.

John L. Palmer, KGT, Grand Generallissimo

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