

The Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the State of Iowa

Series 2025-2026
General Order No. 7



Jason W. Delzell, REGC
October 30, 2025

Christmas Message

To: All Past Grand Commanders, current Grand Officers, Committee Members, Officers, and Sir Knights of all Constituent Commanderies within the Jurisdiction of the Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Iowa.

Right Eminent Grant Commander of the Grand Commandery of Iowa S.K. Jason Delzell has requested the Grand Prelate's Christmas Observance be written and subsequently read in each Iowa Commandery during the month of November/December, 2025.

Date: A.D. November 26, 1177

Two Knights Templar (*) walk into a bar in Jerusalem.

The first K.T. says to the bartender: Is your water pure? We are only permitted to drink wine in moderation, and it must be 'cut' with water. We are celebrating yesterday's victory, so we must have the purest of waters. The bartender replies: My water is the purest. What is your celebration? Second K.T. replies: We are back from the Battle of Montgisard – 80 of us KT's, 375 other knights, and nearly 4000 infantry and archers. Your 16 year old King Baldwin of Jerusalem, in spite of his leprosy, led us in battle. First K.T. adds: We will have one wine with your 'l'eau pure'. Then we must leave, and return to our camp on the Temple Mound. We resume our training, our strict diet, and helping widows, orphans, and innocent maidens, AND arranging for our brothers in various Commanderies in France to help more Christian pilgrims make safe pilgrimage to the Holy Land - while we hold it. Second K.T.: And we must prepare to honor the birth of Christ; remember it was Pope Julius 1 who in AD 350 declared that 'on December 25th Christ was born in Bethlehem of Judea' – not far from

here. Bartender replies: I am a Jew. We are soon to celebrate Hanukkah; when the Maccabees successfully revolted; the Temple was purified and the wicks of the menorah miraculously burned for 8 days with only one day's supply of oil. So I will drink with you; 'l'chiam' – to life! K.T.s: In French we say 'Sante!' 'a la votre!' – 'cheers – to your health!' (Little did they know that they would be in another battle to be led by King Baldwin IV in less than 2 years.)

Jew and Gentiles in the Holy Land. Two celebrations, centuries ago, both involving 'light' and 'gift-giving'. And today we repeat those celebrations.

We, Sir Knights, the modern inculcation of the original *'Poor Fellow Soldiers of Christ, and of the Temple of Solomon' – yes we, too, help the widow, the orphan, the innocent maiden, AND help a Christian minister make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, while it is in peaceful repose.

We are obligated to give, and to help others – in Christ's name – in celebration of God's gift of love and light eternal given to us.

We should also want to share the good news of the birth of Jesus Christ, God's Son, our Lord and Savior, who was born these many years ago, in Bethlehem in Judea. He brought victory over sin and death, and was the bringer of peace to people everywhere, and if we follow His commandment to love one another as He has loved us, ours will be a better world.

Without the birth, there would have been no 'family coming to the Temple in Jerusalem', as did Mary and Joseph forty days after Jesus' birth to present the Babe, and 'give Him over' to God, accepting His divine identity. This was another one of the physical, historical steps that made the Temple and the surrounding area the place we call 'the Holy Land'. Our obligation as Knights Templar is a similar, symbolic step for each of us – we have each given ourselves over to be a faithful follower of the Cross – a cross which would not have held a sacrificial death if there had not been a virgin birth.

Just as the two fictional 'Poor Fellow Soldiers of Christ, and of the Temple of Solomon, who 'took a break from their battles', and the Jewish bartender who took a break from his working, we, too should take a break from the battles of life, and from our work, and raise a glass of wine – or water – or both – in remembrance and celebration of the birth of the Christ Child.

So, with you, and to you, I raise a glass, and together exclaim “Le Chiam” – to life (to His and your birth), and “Sante” (cheers), a la votre (to your health!).

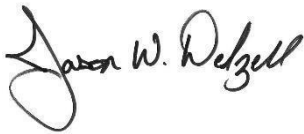
Most especially, as our forerunners, the Knights Templar would have said (in French, of course) ‘Joyeux Noel!’ (pronounced: Joo WAY UHR noh EHL! Emphasis is on the capitalized syllables) Say it with me. Joo WAY UHR noh EHL! Merry Christmas!

Jons Olsson, Grand Prelate

Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Iowa

(Prelate; Commander nominee (2nd time), Baldwin Commandery #11, Cedar Falls.)

Chivalric Regards,



Jason W. Delzell
R.E. Grand Commander



Attested:



Scott A. Schabacker
Grand Recorder

Are covered by this Grand Commandery Knights Templar of Iowa Seal