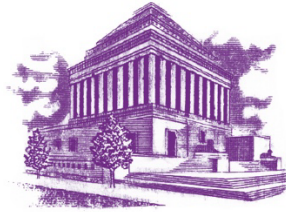


# The Supreme Council

MOTHER COUNCIL OF THE WORLD  
OF THE  
THIRTY-THIRD AND LAST DEGREE

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## ANCIENT & ACCEPTED SCOTTISH RITE OF FREEMASONRY, SOUTHERN JURISDICTION, U.S.A.

### July 4<sup>th</sup> Independence Day Message to the Orient

Some call it July 4<sup>th</sup>, and others call it Independence Day. By whatever name we call it, Americans are grateful for those who saw fit to free us from tyranny and taxation without representation.

We take so much for granted today. People trying to leave their mark on the world or rewrite history will always be part of our existence. Pursuing truth is a noble endeavor, but not at the expense of denying facts.

As members of the Scottish Rite, we have always opposed religious and political fanaticism. Our 'independence' is not a solitary achievement but a collective effort that reflects our shared values and the support we provide for each other to uphold the freedoms we hold dear.

No matter what you call it, this two-hundred-forty-eighth celebration of our nation's declaration to the world is a time for us to reflect on our thoughts, words, and deeds seriously. It is time to pray. It is time to build up and not attack or tear down because true unity depends on what we build together. I'm amazed at those who attempt to tell our story and always seem to forget to say the part about how those not on the winning side of the Revolutionary War were prolonging the freedom we now enjoy.

We live in the greatest nation on Earth. I invite everyone to pray for all our leaders, past and present. Please do not pound them into the ground. Freedom is not about our preferred political party or religious persuasion. Freedom is about being an American! Are we grateful for those who gave us life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness? If so, our nation can truly unite and celebrate even when there are differences of opinion. Masons know how to do it. It involves a level, plumb, and square, but you already know that, so let's continue striving to be better than ourselves every day. Scottish Rite Masons already know that don't we?

So, whatever we call it, let us celebrate with the "Right/Rite Heart," and then, as we unite, let's go to work!