



Most Eminent Knight

David P. Hardie G.C.T.

Supreme Grand Master

2017 - 2019

Sovereign Great Priory of Canada

Knights Templar

SUPREME GRAND MASTER'S CHRISTMAS MESSAGE 2017

Sir Knights, Fraters, and Families

Greetings and Blessings at this Christmas season of 2017

About 2020 years ago an event took place in Bethlehem, a small town 10 Km south of Jerusalem. The significance of that event was not to be appreciated for another 30 plus years. Yet the birth of an infant in a stable in that town would prove to be the most important game-changer in human history!

For hundreds if not thousands of years previously humans had lived in a survival of the fittest mode without much evidence of social consciousness for the weaker members of society. True the institution of the Hammurabi code ameliorated the brutality of vengeance behaviour, but the birth of Jesus of Nazareth signaled a dramatic shift in thought and relationship among people as well as with God.

The Israel nation, the chosen of God, had been a people to know God as an all-powerful, ever-present and all-knowing Creator who had a direct relationship with humanity. However, the actual 'God-with-us' was never truly experienced until Jesus. The birth of Jesus was fully and really God with us!

Over the centuries since that birth, Christians have celebrated Christmas with joy, thanksgiving, and hope. Each year we look forward to the family time and the chance to honour the King of kings. Unfortunately, in the past few decades there has been a usurping of the traditional form of celebration by the secular commercial world. Consumerism has supplanted the Christmas focus. We hop from Thanksgiving Day to Hallowe'en to Christmas morning as quickly as the malls can switch their window dressings. We lose sight of the true meaning of God's salvific action in the Incarnation. We need to return to the foundation of faith.

As you hear this message we are in or near the Advent season the time of preparation and, like a road trip, this season offers an opportunity to SEE and experience the spiritual surroundings leading to the birth. We need to use this time to truly prepare ourselves, to think of what God has done for us by Jesus' birth, to feel the debt of gratitude we have to God and Christ, to let the joy and hope and love wash over us, and to return to the basics of right worship for our Creator in and through the Great Captain of our Salvation.

Christmas is a time of renewal of Faith and a time to understand what God has accomplished in Jesus. Christmas and Good Friday are inextricably connected as are the years of ministry between. The Birth, Life and Death of Christ find their true and ultimate meaning on the Easter morning and the Resurrection. Our hope, our existential hope, now lies in the Ascension and the promises of our Lord. That hope allows us to rejoice fully at this Christmas time. Above all, however, Christ's birth invites us to relish in that Peace which passes all understanding; not the peace of humankind but that Peace which God and Christ shared.

`May this Christmas be one of Peace, Hope, Love and, Joy especially as we recall the blessings God has bestowed and the self-sacrifice others such as first responders, service personnel and friends, have rendered.

Carol and I wish to each and every one a most blessed and merry Christmas.

Yours in Faith and in the Bonds of our Order

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "David P. Hardie", with a horizontal line underneath.

M. Em. Kt. David P. Hardie, G.C.T.