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Newsletter of the Priory of The Holy Isle



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Autumn 2023 Volume 6 Issue 2

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## Jerusalem Mite

by Chevse. Amy M. Force- Garrett, DCTJ

*“Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”*

~ Corinthians 9:6-8

Greetings fellow Knights, Dames, and Companions of Holy Isle! This past summer, I had the great pleasure of attending my first Grand Convent & Investiture which was held in Orlando, Florida. There was so much to take part in, to include a fantastic trip to NASA; something that I had always wanted to do. Conversely, during this very full and busy schedule, there were also breakaway sessions to help those in attendance better understand the different functions that take place, not only within SMOTJ, but within the local Priories. Some fantastic information was relayed to us, including visibility, recruiting efforts, and donation drives. However, the most pressing item I would like to address is concerning donations to the Jerusalem Mite. As it has come to my attention, there seems to be confusion on this particular topic I hope to clear up.

The donations to the Jerusalem Mite collected online when oblations are paid are part of our primary mission as members of SMOTJ. However, a low number of members contribute. In fact, it was reported that only 42% of members donated. This does not need to be a large or substantial donation, as every little bit helps. However, *no* donation makes a considerable impact. His Excellency Ralph Don Robinson, GCTJ, GMTJ, Grand Prior of GPUSA has issued a challenge and reward to all Priories regarding this.

For our Military families this will be a familiar concept. Grand Prior Robinson introduced streamers for Priory flags being distributed to those with notable achievements. Several were awarded at the Grand Banquet in Florida for various recognitions, with the promise that the Priory with the most improved donations to the Jerusalem Mite will receive a streamer to adorn their Priory flag. I encourage you to help Priory of the Holy Isle earn our first streamer. There is a secondary opportunity to make your Jerusalem Mite contribution at the annual donations drive. So, be on the lookout for a mailer from the Grand Aumonier.

Now, you may be asking yourself, “but I buy mites at my local events. Don’t those count?” Well, not towards the national 501c3. To be sure, they still make an impact, so please continue to support your local events. The mites we purchase locally go towards our local impact. As our new Grand Aumonier, Chev. William D. Griffin taught us in his class; when the Knights Templar returned from the Holy Land, they took one day of rest before they were out in their community doing manual labor and other such tasks to physically support their local communities. This is what our locally purchased Mites do. Those funds are allocated for Priory needs and for the Aumonier to make donations to the local 501c3s the Priory supports. I certainly hope this clears up any confusion you may have had on the topic, or at least given a better understanding of how it works. Blessings!

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## **Priory Officers**

### **Prior VII**

H.E. SGM (Ret.) Scott M. Simon, GCTJ  
afsec9@gmail.com

### **Chancellor**

Curtis L. McIver, GOTJ  
curtismciver@verizon.com

### **Sr. Chaplain**

Rev. Eve Butler-Gee, ACTJ  
revevegee@gmail.com

### **Interim Inspector**

SSG Daniel G. Garrett, KCTJ  
prioryholysisle@gmail.com

### **Secretary**

H.E. Robert D. Lockwood, GOTJ  
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holysisle.prior4@gmail.com

### **Treasurer**

H.E. CAPT Davie S. Cottrell, GOTJ  
Prior V Em.  
holysislepriorv@gmail.com

### **Aumonier**

Rev. William Seay, KCTJ  
wcseay@vcu.edu

## **PRIOR'S MESSAGE**

Our Autumnal Priory Convent and Change of Command will be held in Williamsburg, Virginia, on November 17-18. We will use the Bruton Parish Church, Williamsburg, Virginia. Please send in your check for \$80 to our Priory



Treasurer, CAPT Chev. Davie Cottrell, GCTJ. His address is located on the Priory Convent and Change of Command invitation which is added to this newsletter. The Priory will have a hospitality suite (hosted by Dan Garrett and Amy Force-Garrett) at the Embassy Suites hotel in Williamsburg so members can have a place to gather

after the convent. Members of our Priory should make every effort to attend a Priory Convent and Investiture each year. I would like to remind members that we should attend a convent at least once a year to confirm our oath to the order. Many members attend both C&I's to enjoy fellowship with each other. We also like the fellowship that our members bring, including those visitors from the Pories of Region I, II, and III. Please give this your strongest consideration.

Grand Priory and Priory 2023 Oblations are due for six members. Please pay online for the fastest payment method. Please add additional funding to the Priory as we need your financial support each year. Don't forget to add support for the Jerusalem Mite program. Please be generous while showing your support.

This is my last Prior message as your Prior, it has been my honor to serve as your Prior. Every Priory is different and having served in three Pories over the last twenty years, I want to say you guys are the best. My heartfelt thanks to the Priory for supporting me as your Prior. I will always remember those who served in the officer positions during my tenure. Please give your best support to Prior-Elect Chev. Curtis McIver.

Next year the Grand C&I is being hosted by the Pories of Region I, in Hartford, Connecticut from June 6-9, 2024. Registration is open on the Grand Priory website. Please login as a member and then click the registration image link.

Please always remember that members of our Priory must be active and engaged in the work of the Priory. This includes charitable giving to local charities, supporting the

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## PRIOR'S MESSAGE (continued)

Jerusalem Mite, student sponsorship in the Holy Land if possible, supporting local charities through work-effort and man-hours.

God Bless you all!!

nnDnn,

*Scott M Simon*✚

SGM Chev. Scott M. Simon, GCTJ, Prior VII

## CHANCELLOR'S MESSAGE

Have you ever heard someone say, “Obstacles and opportunities are usually the opposite sides of the same coin?” Or, others might say, “Problems are really just opportunities that we haven’t recognized yet.” Interesting sayings, but what messages are they trying to convey to us?

As we go through life, things happen and we experience events with our families, or issues come up at work or with an organization to which we might belong. Sometimes those events might seem to throw a monkey wrench in the process, maybe creating a difficult situation for us, or disrupting our plans. What if we had planned a trip in a couple of weeks to see some National Parks for relaxation, but a big project just landed in our office, and we will not be able to get the time off for the trip. That would be an obstacle to our plans, but could there be an opportunity on the other side of that coin? Maybe if we do a good job on the project, we gain a new client for our business or get a nice bonus that can pay for a longer vacation to see more National Parks! That short-term problem just might be an opportunity for a better result in the long run.

We may be experiencing issues with our Knights Templar organization and our Priory that could be obstacles or opportunities. We have lost members due to death. Some members are not able to contribute to the Priory activities as much as they once did due to age, health concerns or family issues. That can certainly be seen as a problem or

an obstacle to the continued success of the organization. However, this also presents an opportunity for other members to step up into leadership roles and bring their expertise to the



table. This is an opportunity to bring in new, younger members who may bring in fresh ideas and new experiences to better the organization over the long term. New members, trained in newer technologies and processes just might have some ideas

that haven’t been tried before or maybe they’ll be able to add a new twist to improve an existing program. One key is to listen to the new ideas and not just shut them down because “we’ve always done it THIS way.” Sometimes a small change can pay big dividends.

Remember, when we get to a bump in the road and see the “Obstacle” side of the coin is facing us, pick up the coin, turn it over, and look for the “Opportunity” side of the coin. That may lead us down a better path to a greater good for the Priory and for the Knights Templar.

*Semper avanti!*

Curtis McIver, GOTJ, Chancellor

## FROM THE INSPECTOR

It was stated earlier that “when the Knights Templar returned from the Holy Land, they took one day of rest before they were out in their community doing manual labor and other such tasks to physically support their local communities.” During one of Holy Isle’s monthly ExCom meetings, earlier this year, we discussed different ways in which we could physically support our local community. One such suggestion was to aid in roadside cleanup, through the Adopt-a-Highway program.



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## FROM THE INSPECTOR (continued)

The program is nothing new. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) established the Adopt-a-Highway program in 1988. And, since its creation more than 18,000 volunteers throughout the state have collected over 25,000 bags of trash and debris along roads and highways. It is estimated that with the efforts of its volunteers, Virginia has saved almost \$1.5 million it would have otherwise spent towards clean up.

A great perk that comes along with this effort is free advertising. Well...almost free. Through sweat-equity. After cleaning the designated roadside twice within the year, VDOT then provides signs with the organizations name on it; signaling drivers who takes responsibility for that area.

Holy Isle now has signs up in Fincastle, Virginia, located in Botetourt County. The members in the area meet about once a month to do a roadside cleanup. So now, not only are we as Templars “keeping the road to Jerusalem open”, but we are also ensuring that the roads in our local community are open and safe from debris.

nnDnn,

SSG Chev. Daniel G. Garrett, KCTJ, Inspector



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## ANNUAL REPORT INFORMATION

It's getting close to the time for everyone to start thinking about the information needed for our Priory Annual Report to the Grand Priory. Most of the information comes from the Priory Treasurer and the Priory Secretary, however, some of the information must come from you, the individual Knight or Dame. We can fill in all the information about our number of members, meetings, events, attendance, inventory, etc. The information that we need from you concerns the number of hours that you provide for community service activities during this calendar year.

What information do we need from you for the Priory Annual Report for community service activities? And, what constitutes a community service activity? Here are some examples of activities that might be included:

- Volunteering at the local voting precinct
- Volunteering with the local fire department or rescue squad
- Delivering meals for Meals on Wheels or helping at the local food pantry
- Volunteering as a docent at the local museum, church or other facility
- Highway trash pickups
- Serving as a mentor or volunteer at the local school

If you're not sure whether some activity should be included or not, send the information to us and the Executive Committee will review it to see if it meets the criteria from the Grand Priory to be included.

The information that we will need from you will be the name and address of the organization, the activity you participated in and the number of hours that you provided to the organization.

You can send the information to Curtis McIver, Chancellor by email at [curtismciver@verizon.net](mailto:curtismciver@verizon.net) or by the postal service to 320 Dogwood Lane, Nellysford, VA 22958. If you have any questions, please contact Curtis McIver either by email or by telephone at 434-361-1645.



*Ordo Supremus Militaris Templi Hierosolymitani*  
*Sovereign Military Order of the Temple of Jerusalem*  
*Autonomous Grand Priory of the United States of America*

*Priory of the Holy Isle*  
([www.prioryoftheholysisle.org](http://www.prioryoftheholysisle.org))

*His Excellency, The Prior, cordially invites all Knights, Dames, Companions, and Guests, wheresoever dispersed, to attend the Priory's*

*Autumnal Convent & Change of Command*

*Historic Bruton Parish Episcopal Church*  
*Duke of Gloucester Street, Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia*  
*18 November 2023 at 3:00 PM*

*Suggested Hotel:*  
*Embassy Suites by Hilton*  
*3006 Mooretown Road, Williamsburg, Virginia 23185*  
*(757) 229-6800*

✠ *Please make your own reservations* ✠

*Friday 17 November*  
*6:30 PM: Gathering of Members, Companions, and Guests at Fat Tuna Grill*  
*1433 Richmond Road, Williamsburg, VA 23185*  
*Men & Ladies: Business / Templar Casual*

*Saturday 18 November*  
*2:30 - 3:00 PM: Convent Setup*  
*3:00 - 4:00 PM: Ceremonies at Bruton Parish Church*  
*6:00 - 7:00 PM: Prior's Reception at The Queen's Lake Club*  
*7:00 - 9:00 PM: Priory Banquet & Auction at The Queen's Lake Club*  
*Men: Black or White Tie, Highland Evening, or Military Mess Dress with decorations*  
*Ladies: Appropriate long or short dress, or Military Mess Dress with decorations*

✠ *Please bring Auction Items to raise funds for the Priory* ✠

*Convent Registration and Banquet fee: \$80 per person*

*Please RSVP no later than 4 November 2023 to:*

*H.E. CAPT Chev. Davie S. Cottrell, GOTJ*  
*PO Box 189, Hudgins, Virginia 23076*

✠ *Checks payable to "SMOTJ-PHI"* ✠

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**November 17-18, 2023**

Autumnal Convent & Investiture

Bruton Parish Episcopal Church  
Williamsburg, VA @ 3:00PM

**December 9, 2023**

Christmas Luncheon

Center Street Grill  
Williamsburg, VA @ 1:00PM

**May 3-4, 2024**

Vernal Convent & Investiture

St. Andrew's Chapel at St. Joseph's Villa  
Richmond, VA @ 3:00PM

**June 6-9, 2024**

GPUSA Grand Convent & Investiture

<https://2024grandci.org/>

Hartford, Connecticut

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