



THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR
VIRTUAL OBSERVANCE
OF
EASTERTIDE

Submitted to the
Grand Commandery of the Philippines

ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT

March 2021

Sir Knights:

The following are two versions of the Virtual Ceremony in the Observance of Eastertide.

The first option (page 1) is meant for Easter Afternoon or Evening. It is conducted online by and among members of a Commandery in a virtual Asylum, and contains the ceremonial Templar libations.

The second option (page 11) is a service more religious in tone and is meant for Easter Sunrise or Morning. It is a public ceremony that may be conducted with guests who are not members of a Commandery.

These virtual ceremonies have been developed for our jurisdiction, coinciding with our country's current quarantine situation, while still retaining much of the customs and practices prescribed by the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar, USA. Note that the scripts are merely suggested and may be revised by individual Commanderies to suit their needs.



VIRTUAL EASTER OBSERVANCE AT VESPER HOUR (WITH LIBATIONS) FOR THE COMMANDERY OF KNIGHTS TEMPLAR

INSTRUCTIONS

The following virtual ceremony for the Knights Templar Easter Observance is adapted for Philippine-based Commanderies using online meeting platforms. It should be performed in compliance with the Edicts, Circulars, and Regulations of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines and of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the Philippines. Since it is a virtual ceremony, Commandery officers, members, and other Sir Knights are expected to be mindful of their manners, demeanor, and Masonic attire, though may participate while sitting all throughout the ceremony. The ceremony may appropriately be held anytime during or after Easter Day (April 4, 2021). A member of clergy may even optionally be invited as guest speaker, if confirmed to have no objections to Masonry or Masonic Templary. Red wine and drinking glasses are required per participant during the Libations.

START OF VIRTUAL CEREMONY

(Optional Music: Play or sing *"Jesus Christ is Risen Today"* or something similar before starting.)

Commander: * Welcome, Sir Knights and guests, to our virtual public Asylum, commemorating in this vesper hour the Knights Templar Observance of Eastertide, hosted by _____ Commandery No.____, under the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the Philippines. I am your host, _____, and I am the current Eminent Commander of the said Commandery.

This observance is one of the three required services and fundamental traditions of Masonic Templary, the other two being Ascensiontide and Christmastide. However, because of the current Coronavirus Pandemic and the resultant social distancing measures set by our government, our Grand Lodge, and our Grand Commandery, we temporarily gather in this manner online, that we may still commemorate, as Knights Templar, the Resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ.

Why is the commemoration of Easter important to us Masonic Knights Templar? Since we allegorically derive our principal identification to the original Knights Templar of Crusader and Medieval times, we likewise take into heart their Christian ideals and traditions – one, of course, was their passionate celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ – the very foundation of the Christian faith itself.

Medieval Easter was also important to early Christian Europe, as it was the season that coincided with the Vernal Equinox and the rebirth of the countryside. In feudal rural societies, that were never far from starvation, the first sign of crops and vegetation returning after the winter was a good cause for celebration.

Today, Easter is still the most important holiday for Christians of whatever religious sect or denomination. We Masonic Knights Templar also consider it the same way, which is why our traditional observance of Easter somehow resembles those of the Churches. We would like to reiterate that though there may be similarities with the way we celebrate Easter, ours was never meant to be a substitute for the religious observances conducted by our respective denominations. Sometimes we invite members of clergy to deliver Talks before our Masonic gatherings, that we may all together partake in the celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord. Still, please be reminded that when it comes to the prescribed commemoration of Easter by our respective denominations, our place, even as Christian Knights, is in the fellowship of our home congregations and Churches, and not at Masonic gatherings which are but supplementary observances and not substitutes. In doing this, we also help to educate our non-Masonic friends that Freemasons, and Knights Templar especially, are not working against the Church and her teachings, but actually support her with heart, mind, and soul.

That having said, we now begin our Masonic Templar observance of Eastertide.

(Optional, if the Grand Commander is present) :

Commander: Before we commence this afternoon's/evening's ceremony, let us first listen to the Easter message of our Right Eminent Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the Philippines, Sir Knight Rodol Riezel S. Reyes. (When GC is done, the Commander thanks the GC and proceeds.) Sir Knights, you have just heard the Easter message of our Right Eminent Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the Philippines.

Commander: Let us now proceed with the commemoration this vesper hour. Excellent Prelate, please lead us in our opening prayer. Sir Knights, Un-Cover.

INVOCATION

Prelate: Thank you, Eminent Commander. Good afternoon/evening and Happy Easter to all Sir Knights present. The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Prelate: Let us bow our heads in prayer before our Father in Heaven.

God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and show us the light of Your countenance, as we virtually gather here to commemorate the Resurrection of Your only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Be merciful unto us, especially during these dark hours of the Coronavirus Pandemic. "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

All: Amen.

Commander: Sir Knights, Re-Cover.

READING OF THE RESURRECTION STORY

Commander: It is but fitting that we commemorate this day with a reading of the Gospel for Easter Sunday. Excellent Prelate, please read from our holy scripture.

Prelate: The Gospel for Easter Sunday (Mark 16:1-8):

When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. And he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you." And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Commander: The Gospel of our Lord!

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

(Optional, if a guest speaker or a Sir Knight so assigned would deliver a Talk.) :

Commander: Sir Knights and guests, may we introduce to you our speaker for this vesper hour, _____, to inspire and enlighten us today on this most joyous occasion in all Christendom.

(The following sample script would be an appropriate Talk.)

Easter is one of the holiest days for Christians. It is part of what is considered the Triduum, or Great Three Days, consisting of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter or formerly the Vigil of Easter.

Maundy Thursday is the day on which our Savior gathered with his disciples for a final meal and at which he not only showed himself as servant of the servants through the washing of feet, but also instituted the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper, as the "meal of the baptized" and foretaste of the feast to come. It is also the night on which he was betrayed by Judas Iscariot and handed over to Pilate for trial, conviction, and sentencing.

Good Friday, of course, is the day on which our Lord was nailed to the Cross and died for the forgiveness of sins, and then buried and descended into the place of the dead in order to confront and defeat sin, death, and evil – so that we might all be assured that such would have no power over us anymore.

The Vigil of Easter is an event in the Church which served as the primary day in the early Church for baptisms and reception of new people into the Christian faith. As the name suggests, this was a night in which the church stood vigil-on watch-for the coming of the new day and the resurrection of our Lord. In the early days, the Vigil ran deep into the night, and the first Eucharist of the Easter season was celebrated early in the morning-often at sunrise.

For much of the 20th century, the Vigil of Easter was often overlooked, and the Easter Sunrise Service took its place. It wasn't until the liturgical renewal movement in the 1970s that the Vigil began to be celebrated in churches. The Vigil is marked in different ways, but it is becoming increasingly popular. Truth be told, the time to celebrate the Resurrection of our Lord is at the Vigil, rather than on Sunday morning, long after the tomb was found empty.

The Triduum, or Great Three Days, is really one very long "day" of worship. It begins with the Maundy Thursday (and no benediction), continues through Good Friday liturgy (again, no benediction), and concludes with the Saturday evening Vigil, traditionally a two to three-hour service opened with the lighting of the New Fire (often a large bonfire), Old Testament readings, psalms, prayers, canticles, baptism, and then the first Eucharist of Easter. In some Churches, there is a breakfast or "brunch" to break the fast of the Triduum following the Vigil.

What does all this have to do with our common work as Masonic Knights Templars? In comparison with other Maundy Thursday or Good Friday observances, for instance, such are accompanied with feasts. Note that, historically, such days were marked by a fast and not a feast. This is a time when we should be gathered in prayer in our Churches, reflecting on the sacrificial act of Jesus on the Cross. If we as Masonic Knights Templars would like to commemorate our Savior's Death on the Cross, we should do so in the context of a "Holy Week Observance" conducted earlier than on the Holy Week itself, inviting the public to join. A well-designed Asylum would offer us a wonderful opportunity to provide Christian witness, while quietly disproving the notion of Freemasonry being "anti-church" or "anti-Christian." Then, on the day of Easter or thereafter, we Masonic Knights

Templar conclude by commemorating our Savior's Resurrection, as we do today, appropriate to a real and celebratory feast. It should be one of rejoicing and one of gratitude to the Father in Heaven.

-Portions borrowed from Rev. Sir Knight Arthur F. Hebbeler III, Grand Prelate of the Grand Commandery of Maryland, 2009.

(When Talk is done, the Commander gives his thanks to the speaker.)

Commander: Let us now proceed to offer the Prayers of the People. Excellent Prelate, please proceed. Sir Knights, Un-Cover.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Prelate: Let us pray to our victorious Savior on behalf of this Commandery, the world, and all the people everywhere. (Brief silence.) Let your response be: "*Lord, hear our prayer.*" Please repeat.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Commander: Oh Lord Jesus, risen gloriously from the dead, you have snatched us from the snares of the evil one: Alleluia! In you, righteousness and peace kiss one another: Alleluia! In you, all God's promises have their answers: Alleluia! In you, we shall not die but live, and declare the glory of the Lord: Alleluia! Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Response.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Generalissimo: Fill this Commandery with the splendor of your life, light, and love. May its words and deeds proclaim: "*Alleluia, Christ is Risen, He is Risen Indeed!*" Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Response.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Captain General: Impart your deathless love to all Christian Knights Templar who suffer persecution and sickness even on this holy day. Grant them the joy of your saving help. Purge the leaven of evil from the hearts of their tormentors and their disease. Hasten the day when together they kneel before you in adoration. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Response.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Senior Warden: Crown this Order of the Temple and all who gather here with us with unfading joy, unfailing kindness, undaunted hope, and unceasing praise. Let everyone we meet see your goodness revealed in our words and deeds – we, your faithful soldiers and servants. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Response.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Junior Warden: Graciously bless the guests and visitors among us here. Kindle the hearts of those who do not yet believe that you have indeed conquered sin and death. Grant them faith to know that you live to bestow health and life upon them forever. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Response.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Treasurer: Grant peace among all nations. Impart wisdom, integrity, and holy fear to our leaders. Bestow joy, hope, and healing upon all people, especially those afflicted by human malice, natural catastrophe, and deadly epidemics. Bring us into right relationship with you and each other forever. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Response.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Recorder: Be the strong and righteous arm of all who stand in harm's way on behalf of others. Make them brave, wise and good. Shield them from the forces of evil. Heal them when they fall. Fill their loved ones with confidence in your triumph over every foe. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Response.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Standard Bearer: We plead on behalf of all who are sick, wounded, abused, imprisoned, despairing, grieving or dying, and for all who crave your mercy, including those whom we name now aloud or in our hearts and minds. Impart your life and love to them, so they may sing the Psalmist's words, *"I shall not die but live, and declare the works of the Lord!"* Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Response.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Sword Bearer: Most holy and gracious Savior, thank you for redeeming all who have fallen asleep in your arms. In your mercy, wipe away the tears of all whose grief runs deep. Feed us all with a foretaste of your Kingdom feast. Take away the shroud of sin, suffering and sorrow that troubles this broken world. Give us faith to serve one another in humble gratitude for your goodness. Bring us to stand with all the redeemed and sing, *"Blessing, honor, glory and might be to God and the Lamb forever! Amen! This is the feast of victory for our God! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!"* Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Response.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Warder: Grant to us all that is in accordance with your will, Lord Jesus, and accomplish your salvation among us; for you are risen from the dead and dwell in majesty with your Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

All: Amen.

Commander: Sir Knights, Re-Cover.

(Optional Music: Play or sing "*Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds*" or something similar. Done.)

CEREMONY OF LIBATIONS

Commander: As we assemble together for this, our annual Eastertide Observance, paying homage to *Emmanuel*, and once again re-live the story of his Resurrection, let me encourage each of you, Sir Knights, to remember your vows of Christian Knighthood, and to re-dedicate yourselves to the love that manifests itself in the Word of God. Let us also give honor and thanks to our leaders and fellow Sir Knights, wishing them and their loved ones good health. Let us therefore proceed to our series of Libations in their honor. Let every Knight be furnished with a prepared glass of wine. (Done.)

Order of Libations:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. To the ME Grand Master KT | - proposed by the Commander |
| 2. To the RE Grand Commander | - proposed by the Generalissimo |
| 3. To the Masonic Order of the Temple | - proposed by the Captain General |
| 4. To the MW Grand Master F&AM | - proposed by the Senior Warden |
| 5. To the memory of King Solomon | - proposed by the Junior Warden |
| 6. To the memory of Simon of Cyrene | - proposed by the Treasurer |
| 7. To all Freemasons | - proposed by the Recorder |

1st Libation: To the Most Eminent Grand Master (proposed by the Commander)

Commander: Sir Knights, allow me to commence our first Libation. Charge your glasses and partake. Here is to Sir Knight Jeffrey N. Nelson, Most Eminent Grand Master of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar, USA. May Masonic Templary flourish under his leadership, and may God guide his decisions towards the collective good of the Order. (Hold glass higher.) Sir Knights, participate: To the Most Eminent Grand Master!

All: To the Most Eminent Grand Master! (All drink.)

2nd Libation: To the Right Eminent Grand Commander (proposed by the Generalissimo)

Generalissimo: Sir Knights, charge your glasses and partake in our second Libation. The home of Masonic Templarism in our country is the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the Philippines, chartered by the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar, USA on December 31, 1963. It is currently headed by the Right Eminent Grand Commander, Sir Knight Rodel Riezal S. Reyes. I therefore would like to propose a Toast. Here's to our Right Eminent Grand Commander. May his able leadership be inherited by his future successors, and may he receive all the blessings in heaven for steering our Order in the true path of Chivalry and Knighthood. (Hold glass higher.) Sir Knights, participate: To the Right Eminent Grand Commander!

All: To the Right Eminent Grand Commander! (All drink.)

(Optional, if the Grand Commander is present) :

Commander: May we request a short response from our Right Eminent Grand Commander? (Commander thanks the Grand Commander after his speech.)

3rd Libation: To the Masonic Order of the Temple (proposed by the Captain General)

Captain General: Sir Knights, charge your glasses and partake in our third Libation. As Masonic Knights Templar, we have vowed ourselves as Soldiers of Christ, to defend the Christian faith, and to honor Him whose Day of Resurrection we commemorate this afternoon/evening. Let us honor our valiant and magnanimous Order and all our brethren Knights who have shed their blood in defense of liberty and Christianity. May they too experience the Resurrection of our Lord and have eternal life with him and our Father in Heaven, thus exalting our Order as true Knights of Christ. (Hold glass higher.) Sir Knights, participate: To the Masonic Order of the Temple! Au Beauséant!

All: To the Masonic Order of the Temple! Au Beauséant! (All drink.)

4th Libation: To the Most Worshipful Grand Master of Masons and the Grand Lodge (proposed by the Senior Warden)

Senior Warden: Sir Knights, charge your glasses and partake in our Libation to the Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines. It is important for us to never forget that even though we are Knights Templar, we are, first and foremost, Master Masons of the Ancient Craft. It is for this reason that we give thanks and honor to the cradle whence we all came – the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons of the Philippines, headed by Most Worshipful Agapito S. Suan Jr. May he be the exemplar that all Master Masons strive to emulate, and may the Grand Architect of the Universe lend him the wisdom of King Solomon himself. (Hold glass higher.) Sir Knights, participate: To the Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Philippines!

All: To the Most Worshipful Grand Master of the Philippines! (Do not drink yet. Continue next.)

Senior Warden: To the Grand Lodge of the Philippines! O' hail!

All: To the Grand Lodge of the Philippines! O' hail! (All drink.)

(Optional, if the Grand Master is present) :

Commander: May we request a response and speech from our Most Worshipful Grand Master?
(Commander thanks the Grand Master after his speech.)

5th Libation: To the memory of King Solomon (proposed by the Junior Warden)

Junior Warden: Sir Knights, charge your glasses and partake in our Libation to the memory of King Solomon. In all of history, there are two major organizations that derive their principal identification to the Temple of King Solomon – the Freemasons and the Knights Templar. We, therefore, being both Freemasons and Knights Templar, pay tribute to him whom we owe the existence of our Order and from whose Temple we derived our very name “*Order of Temple of Solomon.*” Here’s to the memory of the third and Great King of Israel, whose wisdom and leadership enabled him to accomplish one of the greatest architectural feats of the Ancient world – the building of the First Temple dedicated to Almighty God – a Temple from whose ruins the original Knights Templar later took shelter and derived the very name of their Order. (Hold glass higher.) Sir Knights, participate: To the memory of King Solomon!

All: To the memory of King Solomon! (All drink.)

6th Libation: To the memory of Simon of Cyrene (proposed by the Treasurer)

Treasurer: Sir Knights, charge your glasses and partake in our Libation to the memory of Simon of Cyrene. Let us pay due homage to him who helped our Lord Jesus Christ carry his Cross on the way to Golgotha. He was the first to bear the Cross of the Lord – an act we all should emulate – the proverbial “*carrying of the Cross*” which symbolizes the hardships we all must bear in order to be worthy of “*wearing the Crown.*” We, Knights Templar, know that Masonic leadership would only come upon us after passing the rough and rugged road. Here’s to memory of Simon of Cyrene, who helped bear the Cross which would eventually become the primary symbol of our Order. (Hold glass higher.) Sir Knights, participate: To the memory of Simon of Cyrene!

All: To the memory of Simon of Cyrene! (All drink.)

7th Libation: To all Freemasons (proposed by the Recorder)

Recorder: Sir Knights, charge your glasses and partake in our last Libration. Here's to all Freemasons wherever dispersed, especially those who are absent during this time of the Pandemic – those who serve in the frontlines fighting the disease; those who are poor and distressed; and those who are absent hereto, who are either sick or have perished. Please raise your glasses, as we enjoin all our brethren in the country and the rest of the world – Knights and Masons all – who have virtually and temporarily been meeting online as we are – united by a common Toast:

“Our lodges are closed, our labors are dark. No Tyler by the entrance door we hark. The brethren are absent, some absent forever. Sorry to part, and to meet them again, never. Tis Nine O’Clock here or Nine O’Clock there. We Toast to absent brethren here and there – whether them who aid, the poor and distressed – we wish them the best in these times recessed. Until then, my brethren, your safety we entreat. Until then, my brethren, hoping again to meet.”

(Hold glass higher.) Sir Knights, participate: To all Freemasons!

All: To all Freemasons! (All drink.)

CLOSING

(Commander delivers his parting message. Other high-ranking officers are given the chance to address the attendees.)

Commander: As we conclude our Eastertide Observance in this virtual Asylum, let us receive the benediction of our Excellent Prelate. Sir Knights, Un-Cover.

Prelate: Alleluia! Alleluia! Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and has redeemed us to God by his blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. Blessing and honor, glory and power, be unto Him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. May the blessings of Almighty God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit bless you and keep you. Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen.

All: Amen.

Commander: Sir Knights, Re-Cover. Our Eastertide Observance is concluded. Happy Easter to everyone.*

(Optional Music: Play or sing “*Hallelujah Chorus from Handel’s Messiah*” or something similar.)

- End of virtual ceremony. Fellowship and Harmony ensues. -



VIRTUAL EASTER OBSERVANCE ON EASTER DAY OR EASTER SUNRISE FOR THE COMMANDERY OF KNIGHTS TEMPLAR

INSTRUCTIONS

The following virtual ceremony for the Knights Templar Easter Observance is based on the 2021 Easter Service program of the Grand Encampment of Knights Templar, USA, and adapted for Philippine-based Commanderies using online meeting platforms. It should be performed in compliance with the Edicts, Circulars, and Regulations of the Grand Lodge of the Philippines and of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the Philippines. Since it is a virtual public ceremony, Commandery officers, members, and guests may participate sitting down. The ceremony may appropriately be held anytime during or after Easter Day (April 4, 2021). A member of clergy may even optionally be invited as guest speaker, if confirmed to have no objections to Masonry or Masonic Templary.

START OF VIRTUAL CEREMONY

(Optional Music: Play or sing *"Jesus Christ is Risen Today"* or something similar before starting.)

Commander: * Welcome, Sir Knights and guests, to the virtual commemoration of the Knights Templar Observance of Eastertide, hosted by _____ Commandery No.____, Grand Commandery of the Philippines. I am your host, _____, and I am the current Eminent Commander of the said Commandery.

This observance is one of the three required services and fundamental traditions of Masonic Templary, the other two being Ascensiontide and Christmastide. However, because of the current Coronavirus Pandemic and the resultant social distancing measures set by our government, our Grand Lodge, and our Grand Commandery, we temporarily gather in this manner online, that we may still commemorate, as Knights Templar, the Resurrection of our Savior Jesus Christ.

Why is the commemoration of Easter important to us Masonic Knights Templar? Since we allegorically derive our principal identification to the original Knights Templar of Crusader and Medieval times, we likewise take into heart their Christian ideals and traditions – one, of course, was their passionate celebration of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ – the very foundation of the Christian faith itself.

Medieval Easter was also important to early Christian Europe, as it was the season that coincided with the Vernal Equinox and the rebirth of the countryside. In feudal rural societies, that were never far from starvation, the first sign of crops and vegetation returning after the winter was a good cause for celebration.

Today, Easter is still the most important holiday for Christians of whatever religious sect or denomination. We Masonic Knights Templar also consider it the same way, which is why our traditional observance of Easter somehow resembles those of the Churches. We would like to reiterate that though there may be similarities with the way we celebrate Easter, ours was never meant to be a substitute for the religious observances conducted by our respective denominations. Sometimes we invite members of clergy to deliver Talks before our Masonic gatherings, that we may all together partake in the celebration of the Resurrection of our Lord. Still, please be reminded that when it comes to the prescribed commemoration of Easter by our respective denominations, our place, even as Christian Knights, is in the fellowship of our home congregations and Churches, and not at Masonic gatherings which are but supplementary observances and not substitutes. In doing this, we also help to educate our non-Masonic friends that Freemasons, and Knights Templar especially, are not working against the Church and her teachings, but actually support her with heart, mind, and soul.

That having said, we now begin our Masonic Templar observance of Eastertide.

(Optional, if the Grand Commander is present) :

Commander: Before we commence this morning's ceremony, let us first listen to the Easter message of our Right Eminent Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the Philippines, Sir Knight Rodel Riezel S. Reyes. (When GC is done, the Commander thanks the GC and proceeds.) Sir Knights, you have just heard the Easter message of our Right Eminent Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of the Philippines.

Commander: Let us now proceed with our commemoration. Excellent Prelate, please lead us in our opening prayer.

INVOCATION

Prelate: Thank you, Eminent Commander. Good morning and Happy Easter to all Sir Knights present. The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Prelate: Let us bow our heads in prayer before our Father in Heaven.

God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and show us the light of Your countenance, as we virtually gather here to commemorate the Resurrection of Your only Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Be merciful

unto us, especially during these dark hours of the Coronavirus Pandemic. "Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen."

All: Amen.

READINGS AND LESSONS

Prelate: First Lesson – A reading from Acts of the Apostles 10:34-43:

So Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all), you yourselves know what happened throughout all Judea, beginning from Galilee after the baptism that John proclaimed: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power. He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, but God raised him on the third day and made him to appear, not to all the people but to us who had been chosen by God as witnesses, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

Prelate: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Prelate: Responsorial Psalm (Psalms 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-24). Let your response be: *"Alleluia. Alleluia."* Please repeat.

All: Alleluia. Alleluia.

Prelate: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy endures forever. Let the house of Israel say, "His mercy endures forever." Response.

All: Alleluia. Alleluia.

Prelate: The right hand of the Lord has struck with power; the right hand of the Lord is exalted. I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord. Response.

All: Alleluia. Alleluia.

Prelate: The stone which the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. By the Lord has this been done; it is wonderful in our eyes. Response.

All: Alleluia. Alleluia.

Prelate: This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Response.

All: Alleluia. Alleluia.

Prelate: Second Lesson – A reading from 1 Corinthians 15:19-26:

If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, then at his coming those who belong to Christ. Then comes the end, when he delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

Prelate: The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Commander: The Gospel for Easter Sunday (Mark 16:1-8):

When the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices, so that they might go and anoint him. And very early on the first day of the week, when the sun had risen, they went to the tomb. And they were saying to one another, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" And looking up, they saw that the stone had been rolled back—it was very large. And entering the tomb, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, dressed in a white robe, and they were alarmed. And he said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you." And they went out and fled from the tomb, for trembling and astonishment had seized them, and they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.

Commander: The Gospel of our Lord!

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ!

(Optional, if a guest speaker or a Sir Knight so assigned would deliver a Talk.) :

Commander: Sir Knights and guests, may we introduce to you our speaker for today, _____, to inspire and enlighten us today on this most joyous occasion in all Christendom. (When Talk is done, the Commander gives his thanks to the speaker.)

Commander: Let us proceed to offer the Prayers of the People. Excellent Prelate, please proceed.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Prelate: Let us pray to our victorious Savior on behalf of this Commandery, the world, and all the people everywhere. (Brief silence.) Let your response be: *"Lord, hear our prayer."* Please repeat.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Commander: Oh Lord Jesus, risen gloriously from the dead, you have snatched us from the snares of the evil one: Alleluia! In you, righteousness and peace kiss one another: Alleluia! In you, all God's promises have their answers: Alleluia! In you, we shall not die but live, and declare the glory of the Lord: Alleluia! Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Response.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Generalissimo: Fill this Commandery with the splendor of your life, light, and love. May its words and deeds proclaim: *"Alleluia, Christ is Risen, He is Risen Indeed!"* Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Response.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Captain General: Impart your deathless love to all Christian Knights Templar who suffer persecution and sickness even on this holy day. Grant them the joy of your saving help. Purge the leaven of evil from the hearts of their tormentors and their disease. Hasten the day when together they kneel before you in adoration. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Response.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Senior Warden: Crown this Order of the Temple and all who gather here with us with unfading joy, unfailing kindness, undaunted hope, and unceasing praise. Let everyone we meet see your goodness revealed in our words and deeds – we, your faithful soldiers and servants. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Response.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Junior Warden: Graciously bless the guests and visitors among us here. Kindle the hearts of those who do not yet believe that you have indeed conquered sin and death. Grant them faith to know that you live to bestow health and life upon them forever. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Response.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Treasurer: Grant peace among all nations. Impart wisdom, integrity, and holy fear to our leaders. Bestow joy, hope, and healing upon all people, especially those afflicted by human malice, natural catastrophe, and deadly epidemics. Bring us into right relationship with you and each other forever. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Response.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Recorder: Be the strong and righteous arm of all who stand in harm's way on behalf of others. Make them brave, wise and good. Shield them from the forces of evil. Heal them when they fall. Fill their loved ones with confidence in your triumph over every foe. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Response.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Standard Bearer: We plead on behalf of all who are sick, wounded, abused, imprisoned, despairing, grieving or dying, and for all who crave your mercy, including those whom we name now aloud or in our hearts and minds. Impart your life and love to them, so they may sing the Psalmist's words, *"I shall not die but live, and declare the works of the Lord!"* Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Response.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Sword Bearer: Most holy and gracious Savior, thank you for redeeming all who have fallen asleep in your arms. In your mercy, wipe away the tears of all whose grief runs deep. Feed us all with a foretaste of your Kingdom feast. Take away the shroud of sin, suffering and sorrow that troubles this broken world. Give us faith to serve one another in humble gratitude for your goodness. Bring us to stand with all the redeemed and sing, *"Blessing, honor, glory and might be to God and the Lamb forever! Amen! This is the feast of victory for our God! Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!"* Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer. Response.

All: Lord, hear our prayer.

Warder: Grant to us all that is in accordance with your will, Lord Jesus, and accomplish your salvation among us; for you are risen from the dead and dwell in majesty with your Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

All: Amen.

(Optional Music: Play or sing “*Now All the Vault of Heaven Resounds*” or something similar. Done.)

CLOSING

(Commander delivers his parting message. Other high-ranking officers are given the chance to address the attendees.)

Commander: As we conclude our Eastertide Observance in this virtual Asylum, let us receive the benediction of our Excellent Prelate.

Prelate: Alleluia! Alleluia! Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and has redeemed us to God by his blood, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. Blessing and honor, glory and power, be unto Him that sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. May the blessings of Almighty God, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit bless you and keep you. Alleluia! Alleluia! Amen.

All: Amen.

Commander: Sir Knights and guests, our Eastertide Observance is concluded. Happy Easter to everyone. *

(Optional Music: Play or sing “*Hallelujah Chorus from Handel’s Messiah*” or something similar.)

- End of virtual ceremony. Fellowship and Harmony ensues. -