

THE KEYSTONE



Publication of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of British Columbia and Yukon

Grand First Principal's Message

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Isaiah 9:6,7 "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this."

I know someone who hurriedly purchased a number of Christmas cards, reading only the cover and not the message inside. The cards were quickly signed and addressed, and all but one mailed. Imagine their surprise when they later looked inside the one un-mailed card and read these words:

This card is just to say - A little gift is on the way.

No doubt there were a number of people are still wondering what happened to their presents.

How different is the promise of God. Centuries before the Saviour was born, the Lord spoke through the prophet Isaiah, saying, "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel", and "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given." God always keeps His word, and Galatians 4:4 states, "When the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son."

Recently, a Post Office employee mentioned that they had said, "Merry Christmas" to a lady and received a tongue lashing about mentioning Christmas. The woman was incensed, and the person at the Post Office a little surprised. The person in the Post Office, who had said, "Merry Christmas" didn't mind if someone said Happy Hanukkah or any other form of seasonal greeting to them, but the woman he had spoken to would take any holiday greeting except, Merry Christmas. This reminded me of a man I knew: he was notoriously crude and irreligious. Every sec-

ond word was four letters, and he even managed to split a few longer words to insert four letter words in the middle. Strangely, after we visited a few times he stopped swearing almost entirely. He had become conscious of the fact that I was not swearing. One day, he smashed his fingers, and let go with a long stream of profanity. Suddenly, he stopped looked at me and said, "Sorry." His comments were crass and offensive; but, as G. K. Chesterton had said: "Even when men knock on the door of a brothel they're looking for God." Chesterton was absolutely right: many people's desires and even anger are evidence of a deep hunger for God. This man, who appeared to be so far from God, was closer than he realized.

At Christmas, we celebrate that Jesus Christ was the Son of God and came to earth. However, that's only part of what we celebrate. We also celebrate His perfect life, that life sacrificed on a cross, and that He was raised from the dead three days later (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). This is the greatest story ever told, and it never grows old.



This Christmas Day, as we remember the birth of Christ, let's thank God that He means what He says. He reaches out to all people, the rich and poor, religious and profane. God not only promised to reach out to man, but kept His promise and gave us the most indescribable gift, His own Son.

Merry Christmas

MEC Joel J. Chiri

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Grand Chaplain's Christmas Message



On 21st November the Christian churches celebrated what is known as Reign of Christ Sunday. It is to commemorate the end of the Christian Calendar and the commencement on the next Sunday as the start of Advent, those Sundays leading to Christmas Day, the birth of our Exemplar.

Like many, I am certain you will have part, if not all, of Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol read to you or shown to you through the many film versions of the story. Perhaps it is one of the Christmas traditions that the story is read or your read the story to yourself; and I won't spend any more time on the story, so well known by all, except to remind us all that it is a story of love, joy, hope, and peace. And hidden in the story is a more meaningful message that I want to take a few moments of your time to draw to your attention. The story is about relationships.

Our lives are but a continuous conversation; and, with conversations, we must have at least two people involved. We speak or we listen. Relationship is one of the hidden pillars of Freemasonry too, and an integral part of our work. We invite men to join us in our work, we give them the title companion and we warmly welcome them each time we meet. The chapter, like the lodge, becomes an extension of our family; we pledge support and help at every turn of each others lives so that never again will we feel alone or left to ourselves.

Christmas tends to be the most active time in our society to stretch forth a hand of help to others less fortunate, to renew relationships of family, and to raise a glass of cheer to one another's well being for another year. We do it without thinking because of the joyousness of the time of season. But, like the story of A Christmas Carol, we visit that sentiment but once a year, and often do not think seriously about changing, as Scrooge changed, to ensure that every day is a day of blessing, that we stretch forth the hand of friendship to those of our family as well as to all people.

We show love for our fellow man by being genuinely warm in our greetings. We see the joy of each day as a gift which should be used to the fullest. We seek hope in ourselves that we will change, that Christmas will not be just a one time only each year but every day, and we hope for the best of our world to continue to search for a better life for all. Finally we pledge peace – a peaceful life we work towards, peace in our family, and in our Chapters. But most of all, we bring to our world that special message of relationship – we will ever remind ourselves that we all continue to live each day to be better and to make our fellow man feel better because he was in our company.

To those of the Christian faith, a Merry Christmas to you. For those of other faiths, I offer to you the enjoyment and participation of our celebration and its message. May you share the message with your loved ones as we do. And may we all be that much better because we care. Love, Joy, Hope and Peace to you all.

Companion Stephen Godfrey

Grand Chaplain

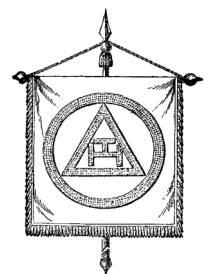


A Gift to Use to the Fullest

If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And -which is more -you'll be a Man, my son!

Rudyard Kipling

Companions or businesses may purchase from Grand Scribe Ezra a business card ad (see page 4) , running for 3 issues of the Keystone at a cost of \$20. Please include a copy or electronic file of your card. to Grand Scribe Ezra at the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of BC and Yukon.



Breakfast at McDonald's

Having been assigned a Sociology class project to go out and smile at three people and write of thier reactions, one woman writes:

Soon after we were assigned the project, my husband, youngest son, and I went out to McDonald's one crisp March morning.

It was just our way of sharing special playtime with our son. We were standing in line, waiting to be served, when all of a sudden everyone around us began to back away, and then even my husband did.

I did not move an inch... An overwhelming feeling of panic welled up inside of me as I turned to see why they had moved. As I turned around I smelled a horrible 'dirty body' smell, and there standing behind me were two poor homeless men.

As I looked down at the short gentleman, close to

me, he was 'smiling'. His beautiful sky blue eyes were full of God's Light as he searched for acceptance. He said, 'Good day' as he counted the few coins he had been clutching. The second man fumbled with his hands as he stood behind his friend. I realized the second man was mentally challenged and the blue-eyed gentleman was his salvation.

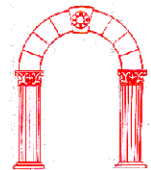
I held my tears as I stood there with them. The young lady at the counter asked him what they wanted. He said, 'Coffee is all Miss' because that was all they could afford. (If they wanted to sit in the restaurant and warm up, they had to buy something. He just wanted to be warm). Then I really felt it - the compulsion was so great I almost reached out and embraced the little man with the blue eyes.

That is when I noticed all eyes in the restaurant were set on me, judging my every action. I smiled and asked the young lady behind the counter to give

me two more breakfast meals on a separate tray. I then walked around the corner to the table that the men had chosen as a resting spot. I put the tray on the table and laid my hand on the blue-eyed gentleman's cold hand. He looked up at me, with tears in his eyes, and said, 'Thank you.'

I leaned over, began to pat his hand and said, 'I did not do this for you. God is here working through me to give you hope.' I started to cry as I walked away to join my husband and son. When I sat down my husband smiled at me and said, 'That is why God gave you to me, Honey, to give me hope.' We held hands for a moment and at that time, we knew that only because of the Grace that we had been given were we able to give.

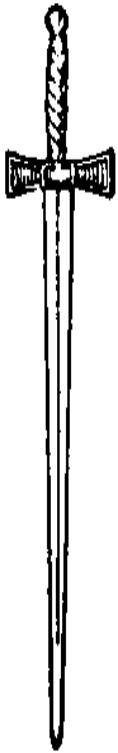
Thanks to the Grand Chaplain for having contributed this heartwarming story.



Spring Board of General Purposes 2 April, 2011 - Kelowna, B.C.

- Venue:** St. George's Lodge Hall, 1564, Pandosy Street, Kelowna
- Registration:** From your Scribe E or on-line at www.grandchapter-bc-yukon.ca
- Meet & Greet:** Friday, April 1, 19:00-21:00, St. George's Lodge Hall
- Opening:** Saturday, April 2, 08:00
- Accommodation:** Vineyard Inn, 2486 Hwy 97 (Harvey), corner of Powick and Harvey
Toll Free Reservation number: 1-888-547-6667

Liberal Arts & Sciences: Grammar

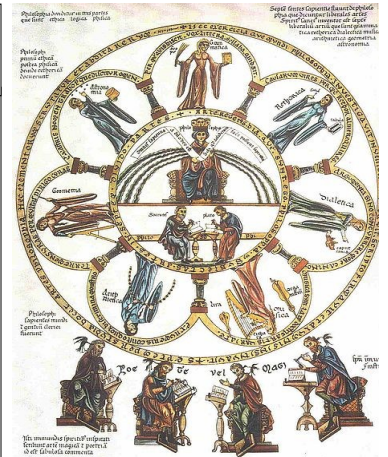


This article is the second in a series describing the seven Liberal Arts and Sciences and their context within Freemasonry.

The first of the *Trivium*, the part of the Seven Liberal Arts and Sciences concerning language, is Grammar. In defining grammar within the context of Freemasonry, Dr. Albert Mackey quotes the 16th Century linguistic Theorist, Sanctius: "God created man the participant of reason; and, as he willed him to be a social being, he bestowed on him the gift of language, in the perfecting of which there are three aids. The first is Gram-

mar, which rejects from language all solecisms and barbarous expressions; the second is Logic, which is occupied with the truthfulness of language; and the third is Rhetoric, which seeks only the adornment of language."

The word grammar, itself, is from the Greek expression for "art of letters". Simply put, it is the set of rules that each of us recognize (whether consciously or otherwise) for using our own language. While there is a conscious, studious process that is used in learning the grammar associated with English, the larger part of our un-



derstanding (beginning in our pre-school days) derives from listening to others or to reading their works.

Sources:

en.wikipedia.org

Mackey, A.G. 1949. *Lexicon and history of Freemasonry*. T.A. Maclure: Philadelphia. 570.p.

masonicdictionary.com

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