

INTRODUCTION

I bid you welcome. I am the Pastor of the Fresno Christian Growth Center, the church from which and in which the knighthood Order of the Green Cross was conceived, implemented and established. In the pages that follow you will learn about our order's way or rule of life, what and who we are, and what we are not.

There will be explanations given about our colors, symbols and regalia, our ranks and titles, our stages of advancement, and so on. You will be given a detailed outline of the curriculum and requirements you will have to study and complete in order to advance from a Squire to a Sr. Squire, and on to becoming a full-fledged Knight.

We are not playing pretend here. Our Order is an official Knighthood Order endorsed and certified, as well as consecrated by the Episcopal Bishop of the San Joaquin – John-David Schofield who agreed to do this only after carefully looking at our ceremonies, philosophy and structure, and only after doing research on his own and giving his input into our Order's way of life and or dubbing ceremony so that we are connected to something bigger and older than we are: the ancient knighthood Orders of the 12th century. So what you are about to embark on is a journey that, if you are committed, and persevere, and apply yourself with your whole heart, will end with your dubbing ceremony and the title Sir, being attached to your name.

This process is costly: it will cost you. There are things that others are allowed to do and behaviors others are free to engage in, that you will be forbidden to participate in. Our Order has a motto: we understand ourselves to be *"in the world, but not of the world."* We anticipate that the world in which we live will only grow more corrupt, immoral, and hostile to Christianity and Biblical revelation and truth. We have set ourselves apart and endeavor to fight the good fight of faith and so remain uncorrupted by the world so we can testify to it of the saving power of Jesus Christ and the nearing of His second coming.

Biblical truth is being compromised in our day like in no other. Never has there been more hostility toward the Bible being the infallible word of God. Never has there been more hostility toward the Ten Commandments and the Biblical revelation of the person and work of Christ. Nevertheless, we see ourselves as commissioned to be "Keepers of the flame" of the orthodox Christian faith, foretold by the prophets, incarnate in our Lord, passed down through the preaching of the apostles and canonized in what we call the New Testament. God has called this order to be protectors of the church and defenders of orthodoxy in a world growing dark with deception, falsehood and rebellion, both in and out side the church.

Our Knighthood program will help you learn Biblical wisdom and truth, what is and what is not orthodox, and how to mature into a godly man, husband and

father. It is not for the cowardly, content, or confused rebel. As William Marshall, perhaps the greatest Knight, once put it,

What then is Chivalry? So strong a thing, and of such hardihood, and so costly in the learning, that a wicked man or low dare not undertake it... Whoso would enjoy high honor first must suitably display that he has well been schooled to such arts.

From the Biography of William Marshall¹

This program also weeds out those who are in it simply because they want to get a sword, or be looked up to, or be esteemed higher than someone else. It will expose those who are not willing to put Christ first in their lives, and who secretly live a double life. We are not afraid to expose, humble or take away honor once earned, that has been disgraced. Mark these words carefully: the calling to be a knight is a calling to self-sacrificing service and deprivation for the good of Christ's holy church, the Christian faith, and the care and protection of the weak and defenseless. Being committed to membership in this order takes a calling from God, and the understanding that we are not here to make things better for your sake, but make you a better man for Christ's sake. If you turn out to be true, you will find in our midst sword brothers who will remain true to you all the days of your life, and will one day hear them say to you, "Friend to friend, brother to brother, yours in life and death. Prove false, and shame and dishonor will mark you instead.

The Order of the Knights of the Green Cross is spreading across our land and throughout the United States. Soon, no doubt, it will become internationally recognized. Therefore, others are looking to us and up to us for an example of the heroic and virtuous. What once was believed to not be possible, is now proving that virtue and purity of heart and mind are obtainable by the grace of God. We cannot afford to let anyone slip through the cracks who would bring dishonor, shame and reproach onto our Order, and so disgrace the gospel. Be advised, we will be watching your progress, scrutinize your conduct, rebuke, reprove, correct and admonish you as you embark and continue your pilgrimage and quest to be God's man in the evil day. Live true, and respect and honor will be yours in Christ. Live false, and you will testify against yourself that you care not enough for the things of God, and unworthy to be called a Knight of the Order of the Green Cross.

Proceed if you will....

¹ As quoted by Robert Lewis in his book Raising a Modern Day Knight, p. 43