

October 2026

THE TEMPLAR CHRONICLES



Six Months In...

It is astonishing to realise that six months have already passed since the election for Grand Prior, and in that short time so much has been accomplished. I am profoundly grateful for the wonderful support and tireless work of so many of our members. Through your commitment and dedication to our Order, we have moved forward together in ways that should inspire us all:

- A successful May Investiture.
- A new finance system and financial protocols, ensuring transparency and accountability.
- A new "Templar Chronicles", enriched by the contributions of so many of you.
- New regalia and cross.
- Registration of OSMTH England with the Armed Forces Covenant.
- A new partnership with the Churches Conservation Trust, giving us new homes for the Order.
- Continued strengthening of our spiritual and martial aspects.
- More resilient preceptories and growing interest from prospective members.
- An online Templar history course.
- Enthusiastic creation of handmade, high-quality Templar items to raise funds.
- A joyful celebration of the Feast of St John in London.
- A thoughtful celebration of the Feast of St Bernard of Clairvaux through an online talk.
- New roles within the Order, including Medicus, Peregrinus Princeps, Vigil, Securitatis, Deaconus, Capellanus Magnus, and others.
- Pilgrimages to London, Rochester, and beyond.
- Planning for an inaugural Templar Fayre in 2027.
- Plans to be involved in the English Medieval Festival.
- Revised and enhanced ceremonies for Postulants, Vigils, and Investiture.



Our Grand Marshal, Warden of Benevolence, Commanders, Preceptors, Grand Chaplain, Medicus, and many others have led and supported a wide range of activities. I know I may have overlooked individuals; if so, please know your contribution is no less valued. To those who have offered quiet, steady, and unwavering support behind the scenes, my heartfelt thanks. Every member's voice matters to me, and I welcome your thoughts and ideas at any time. You are the very reason our Order lives and grows.

I am especially thankful to our Grand Prior General, our Grand Secretary, and my wife, Companion Claire, for their encouragement, support, wisdom, and calming influence whenever my enthusiasm for a new project has run ahead of me. My thanks to you all.

As we look to the next six months, OSMTH England will continue to grow, deepen its foundations, and build on the momentum we have created together. I look forward with genuine anticipation to seeing many of you in Christchurch later this month, at what promises to be an inspiring and enjoyable occasion as we host our Grand Master and delegations from two visiting Grand Priorities. Together, we are shaping a future for the Order of which we can all be proud.

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DIARY DATES

Investitures

23rd—26th October 2026
Christchurch Priory,
Dorset

18th—20th June 2027 *
Venue to be confirmed

15th—18th October 2027
Venue to be confirmed

23rd-25th June 2028 *
Venue to be confirmed

13th—15th October 2028
Venue to be confirmed

* DATE CHANGE to coincide
with the Feast of John the
Baptist!

Other Events

From 2027, we will preserve the
following dates as
commemorations of the OSMTH
festivals.

19th - 21st March 2027
Martyrdom of Jacques de Molay,
Paris

24th June 2027
Feast of St John the Baptist
(See date changes above)

20th August 2027
Feast of St Bernard,
Abbot of Clairvaux (TBC)

13th October 2027
Templar Remembrance Day

27th December 2027
Feast of St John the Evangelist
(TBC)

The Ceremony for the Presentation of the Postulant Medallion

Chev. Doug Campbell, Commander of the South and Quartermaster

On the 17th September 2026, it was again my pleasure to be able to welcome two more Postulants into the Preceptory of the Sword, within the Commandery of the South. They were presented with their medallions, something I have come to really enjoy.

On this occasion I was able to present the medallions using the full postulant ceremony in a lovely private room within the Six Bells pub in St. Albans, the regular meeting place Preceptor Chev. Mike Shephard uses for his quarterly preceptory meetings. These have become a fixed and enjoyable part of the calendar for the Chevaliers, Companions and Postulants within his Preceptory.

I personally have looked forward to this presentation, as the previous postulant entering the Order through the Preceptory of the Axe run by Preceptor Bill Straub, Kamal Shrivastava, participated in the first abridged version of the ceremony within the beautiful cloisters of the priory garden of the Order of St. John.

The Ceremony has been written in two formats: one for a more private place for the event where the full version is undertaken, and a second which can be used if the area is within a more public setting. Both have now proven to be a success.

The table was set with symbols of the Order and the Preceptory. The room was darkened, with candles lit to set the stage and to show that what was about to happen was something a little above ordinary; something a little bit special.



Postulants Peter Curley and Andrew Shephard after putting their mark in the Preceptory Register

Chevaliers and Companion and guests of the Order were assembled, and the candidates were received and placed in their respective seats, in preparation for what awaited them.

But it is not just for me to tell you how well I thought it went, so I asked for a response from those involved. Andrew Shephard (no relation to Chev. Mike Shephard) reported the following;

“As I approached the venue, I felt a mixture of excitement, pride and anticipation, knowing that I was about to embark on a new adventure and become part of an esteemed military and religious Order. Naturally, I experienced some nervousness, but those feelings quickly faded as the Commander and Preceptor warmly welcomed me and put me at ease.

The ceremony was conducted with great dignity and precision, reflecting the rich traditions, values and heritage of such a distinguished Order of knights. As it progressed, I became increasingly aware of the genuine warmth, friendship and acceptance shown by those present. I felt as though I was being welcomed into a family united by shared principles and purpose.

Afterwards, I felt a sense of accomplishment and belonging. I was left with a profound sense of gratitude, pride and enthusiasm for the journey ahead.”

Chev, Dean Shaul, the Preceptory's secretary and for the purpose of the ceremony Sergeant and Registrar reported;

“Mike and Doug created a postulant ceremony to introduce our two members Peter Curley and Andrew Shephard to the Order.

The Ceremony for the Presentation of the Postulant Medallion Continued

This looked very professional and serious. Though rather short, the words were well chosen, and the ceremony carried the appropriate gravitas. The props were also excellent and the symbolism poignant. I feel that it was a resounding success.”

Finally, from the Preceptor of the Sword, Chev. Mike Shephard;

“I am delighted that Doug and Albin have worked together to produce a new ceremony worthy of being the starting point for a new member’s journey as a Knight Templar. The words and tone drew all to bear witness to the new member’s pledge.

The ceremonial aspects of the occasion all had meaning, and these became discussion points after the ceremony was completed. We finished the proceedings with the breaking of bread, and all enjoyed a relaxing and convivial meal.”

Closing words;

Regular Preceptory meetings are a forum for you to meet with other members of your Preceptory to discuss together the best way to not only discuss how to move the Preceptory forward, push new ideas through the chain of command, from Preceptor, to Area Commander and then through to Chapter and ultimately the Magisterium, but to also spend more time together as Brothers and Sisters in the Order. Although these are best done in person, if the distances are too great, Zoom or Teams may be used. More information regarding holding a “Preceptory Meeting” rather than a “Social Event” will follow in due course, along with the “Postulant Ceremony”



NND

Introduction to the Knights Templar Course

We are delighted to share that 19 members have already completed the Introduction to the Knights Templar course and assessment. This is a wonderful beginning, and we warmly encourage all members, including Companions, to take this opportunity to deepen their understanding of our Order and its heritage.

Every journey within the Knights Templar is built on knowledge, reflection and commitment. For Postulants, completing this course before investiture is an essential step on that path, helping prepare heart, mind, and spirit for the responsibilities ahead.

The course, "[Introduction to the Knights Templar](#)", is available to you and can be accessed using the password: OSMTHEngland2026.

For those who wish to formally mark their achievement, an online assessment is provided, leading to a Certificate of Achievement. A 100% score is required, but both members and Postulants may take the assessment as many times as needed. Each attempt is an opportunity to grow in knowledge and understanding, and to honour the values we share as modern Knights Templar.

[Complete Test Form](#)

Armed Forces Covenant

You can now read our pledge to the [Armed Forces Covenant](#) on the Government website. All OSMTH members are urged to think of ways in which can bring our pledge to the Armed Forces to life. If you have ideas, contacts etc which we can use then please let us know.



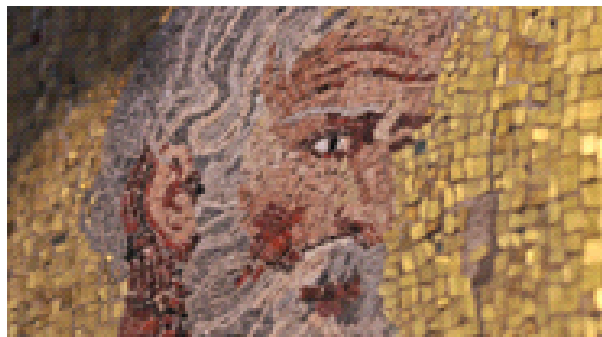
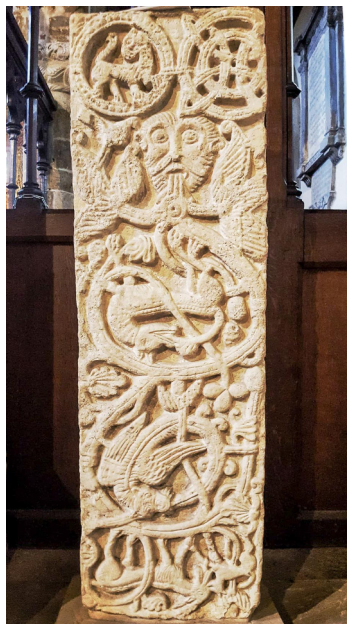
PROUDLY
SUPPORTING
THOSE WHO
SERVE.

A New Home... or many?

Chev. Albin Wallace - Grand Prior Designate

After thorough investigations and extensive negotiations, the Grand Secretary and I are delighted to share some truly uplifting news. We have established a strong and promising ongoing relationship between OSMTH England and the Churches Conservation Trust (CCT), the national charity dedicated to protecting historic churches at risk. This partnership opens the door to new possibilities for our Order and offers us a meaningful role in helping to bring these sacred, historic spaces back to life.

With the support of the CCT, and following careful discussions, we have received the generous agreement of The Reverend Canon Oliver Cross – Rector of All Saints and Holy Sepulchre, Northampton, Rural Dean of Greater Northampton, and Bishop's Representative of the See of Richborough – to use St Peter's Church, Northampton, for OSMTH Investiture services. We will present this proposal to Chapter at our Bournemouth event, where we will look towards the future together.



St Peter's stands in a peaceful grass churchyard in Northampton town centre, beside the buried remains of a Saxon palace. This 900-year-old Norman church is a remarkable testament to faith and history, filled with glorious carved treasures. Within its walls, great Norman arches of plain and banded stone rise and flow in sweeping zig-zag patterns, reminding us of the enduring craftsmanship and devotion of those who came before us.

Although the building has not been used for regular worship for many decades, it remains consecrated – a sacred place, simply waiting to be brought back into fuller use. Apart from occasional tours and events, it is rarely used, and both the Friends of St Peter's and the Churches Conservation Trust are genuinely delighted at the prospect of our Order using the church for investiture services and other functions.

A New Home... or Many? (Continued)

At this stage, we propose that it become the venue for our June Investitures, and the grounds also offer great potential for future events such as a Templar Fayre, giving us further opportunities to gather, commemorate, and serve.

The CCT cares for more than 350 churches entrusted to them by the Church Commissioners of the Church of England. They repair the damage caused by years of neglect and work hand in hand with local communities to bring these buildings back to life. In supporting their work, we also support the renewal of heritage, community and worship spaces across the country.

We will now explore the possibility of using some of their other churches for our October Investitures, and we warmly invite those members who previously offered their help in finding us a new home to renew that spirit of service. Please consult the CCT church map and suggest other churches that may be suitable. We are very happy to arrange field trips to promising locations. As you consider possible sites, please bear in mind the need for good transport links, as well as nearby accommodation and appropriate banqueting facilities, so that our gatherings can be both dignified and accessible to all.

St Peter's itself is very well situated, with excellent road and rail connections and a large hotel within walking distance. These are the kinds of practical benefits we will seek in any other prospective sites, ensuring our members can come together with ease and comfort.

In the near future, we will arrange a visit to St Peter's in collaboration with the Friends of St Peter's group, and we will warmly invite all members to see what we hope will become our new base. This is more than just a change of venue; it is an opportunity to root our work in a place of deep history and spiritual resonance, and to play our part in giving new purpose to a great church of England's Christian heritage.

We look forward to walking this path with you, and to seeing St Peter's – and, in time, other historic churches – renewed with life, fellowship and the continuing witness of our Order.

The Templars and Cyprus

In 1191, on his way to the Holy Land for the Third Crusade, King Richard the Lionheart stopped off in Cyprus and conquered it — as one did when a Mediterranean journey offered an unexpected opportunity. Within weeks, however, the English king needed money for his campaign and sold his new island to the Templars for 100,000 bezants.

Historians reckon this was a bargain: the sum would have paid for only 330 knights for a year. Unfortunately, the Templars soon discovered that buying an island was rather easier than running one. They lacked the manpower, their administration infuriated the local Cypriots and, on Easter Day 1192, the islanders rebelled and attempted to massacre the Templars in Nicosia.

The knights crushed the uprising with brutal force, then concluded that perhaps island government was not their forte after all. They returned to Richard and asked him to undo the sale.

Happily for the king, another customer appeared: Guy of Lusignan, recently deposed as King of Jerusalem and therefore conveniently in the market for a new kingdom. He became King of Cyprus, and his descendants ruled the island for the next three centuries.

I wonder whether the Knights Templar ever received a refund? History is conspicuously vague on the returns policy for conquered islands, and buyer's remorse!



The Enigmatic Knights Templar

Understanding the history - a perspective

The Knights Templar emerged in the early twelfth century during the Crusades. After Christian armies captured Jerusalem in 1099, pilgrims travelled to the Holy Land along roads where robbery was more common than reliable signposts. A small brotherhood of knights formed to protect them and became a recognised religious military order. Its members combined the lives of monk and soldier, taking vows of poverty, chastity and obedience while committing themselves to armed service. This unusual arrangement shaped the ideal of the Christian warrior: disciplined, devout and willing to put duty before personal safety.

From modest beginnings, the order expanded rapidly. Support from church authorities, rulers and noble families brought land, money and recruits—three things medieval organisations needed almost as much as divine approval. Templar houses, estates and commanderies appeared across Europe, while fortifications and military bases supported operations in the eastern Mediterranean. Although individual members pledged poverty, the institution itself became wealthy and influential. Its white mantles bearing a red cross were recognised throughout Christendom, and centralised leadership allowed property, personnel and resources from many kingdoms to serve a common purpose.



An international structure required capable administration. European estates generated income, maintained horses, trained recruits and gathered supplies for campaigns overseas. Local commanders answered to senior officials, while records and established procedures-maintained standards across great distances. The Templars faced problems familiar to later international organisations: moving resources, preserving a shared identity, supervising regional leaders and coordinating activity across borders. Their success depended not only on battlefield courage but also on communication, logistics and accounting—the less glamorous machinery that stops grand ventures becoming expensive muddles.

The order also developed an important financial role. Its secure houses allowed travellers, pilgrims and crusaders to deposit money or valuables in one place and sometimes draw on their value elsewhere using written documents. The Templars safeguarded assets, transferred funds, extended credit and managed estates for rulers and nobles. This was not modern banking—there were no cash machines beside the castle gate—but it reveals the sophistication of medieval commerce and the value of trusted networks operating across several jurisdictions.

Military discipline remained central to Templar life. Medieval battles could quickly become chaotic, especially when mounted warriors abandoned formation in pursuit of glory. Templar knights were trained to act together, obey commands and maintain cohesion under pressure. Their reputation reflected the belief that organised teamwork beat individual strength, however impressive the armour. Courage was meant to be guided by faith, humility and responsibility: not merely violence or renown, but defending others and accepting sacrifice for a higher calling. Training, loyalty and shared duty still echo in professional military culture, although modern armed forces operate in very different circumstances.

By the late thirteenth century, the crusader states had largely been lost and the Templars' original purpose had weakened. Their wealth, privileges and independence also attracted resentment, as such advantages generally do. In 1307, King Philip IV of France ordered many Templars arrested and accused of serious offences. Interrogations followed, with some confessions obtained under coercion. After prolonged controversy, Pope Clement V dissolved the order in 1312. Its last Grand Master, Jacques de Molay, was executed in Paris in 1314. After roughly two centuries, the institution met an abrupt and grim end.

The circumstances of the suppression ensured that the Templars' story endured. Questions about royal debt, political ambition, institutional rivalry, forced confession and justice encouraged later speculation. Over time, tales of hidden treasure, secret knowledge and clandestine survival became tangled with the historical record; apparently, a dramatic disappearance is rarely allowed to remain merely administrative. The order consequently passed from documented medieval history into legend. Its rise and fall still invite debate about government and religious power, the treatment of accused people, and the importance of examining allegations carefully and fairly.

Templar imagery outlived the medieval order. The white mantle and red cross became recognisable symbols in churches, literature, film, art and popular culture. Historically, they expressed allegiance, devotion and corporate identity; today they can carry different meanings and require responsible use. The Crusades involved warfare, rivalry, conviction, cultural conflict and suffering among Christians, Muslims, Jews and others. A balanced account must acknowledge both medieval ideals and the harsher realities in which people pursued them.

The Enigmatic Knights Templar - Continued

Later Christian, charitable and fraternal organisations adopted Templar names, crosses and traditions. They are best understood as revivals inspired by the medieval order, not as its uninterrupted continuation—a distinction that rather spoils the livelier conspiracy theories. Their connection is one of ideals rather than demonstrable succession. Many emphasise faith, honour, fellowship, charity and service through support for families, veterans, children, churches, shelters, disaster relief and humanitarian projects.

This modern interpretation shifts knighthood from warfare to service. Someone inspired by Templar ideals might protect vulnerable people, feed those who are hungry, mentor a young person, strengthen a community or defend convictions peacefully. Titles, mantles and crosses matter less than conduct: keeping one's word, showing compassion, practising self-discipline and helping without demanding applause—or a particularly impressive cloak. Service rather than status becomes the true test of commitment.

More than seven centuries after their suppression, the Knights Templar remain prominent in the public imagination. Their discipline shaped ideas of the ideal warrior, their financial networks reveal sophisticated medieval commerce, and their administration shows how an organisation could cross borders without email or spreadsheets. Their downfall still raises questions about justice and institutional power, while their symbols sustain history and legend alike. Their clearest lesson lies not in castles, swords or secret treasure, but in a simpler principle: strength is best measured by the people it serves.

The order lives on through modern Templarism, and its ideals of faith, honour, courage, charity and duty endure in the hearts of honourable men and women Templars in the 21st century.

Templar Flat Bread

Bread has been around since well before the Knights Templar existed, and it would have formed a significant element of their diet, but the thought of the Knights Templar sitting down and slathering a slice of modern, processed, thick-sliced Mother's Pride, is nonsensical, so what bread would they have enjoyed? The most likely option is a flatbread, probably cooked in a pan rather than an oven... something like this, perhaps...

450 g of rough bread style (unleached) flour, like bread flour, maybe even with some husks left in

150 g of Greek Yoghurt (it's probably the Templars would have used curdled milk)

110 ml water, lukewarm

1 handful of pitted green olives (optional)

10 g Yeast, or more authentically a raising agent like baking powder

pinch of salt

50 ml Olive Oil (optional) for brushing

How to make

1. In a large mixing bowl add yogurt and water and mix thoroughly. Keep a small amount of the water back for blending with the yeast (if using baking powder mix with the flour) and stir until it gets bubbly..
2. Next, add the yohurt mix to the flour, along with the olives (if using) and pinch of salt. When incorporated add the yeast mixture and mix thoroughly.
3. Leave aside, covered in a warm place until it has doubled in size and then knead a soft, non-stick dough. Divide the dough in 8-10 equal parts. Roll out each piece of dough onto floured surface – it should be thin and round.
4. In the meantime, preheat grill pan on the fire or stove. When pan is hot place one piece of dough on it. When flat bread starts to bubble it's ready to be flipped over (usually 1-2 min on my stove top). Remove from pan and repeat for remaining dough.
5. Stack flat breads one over another. Serve plain or brushed with olive oil and sprinkled with sea salt.

Travelling the Country

Temple Ewell, near Dover in Kent

Temple Ewell was founded in the eighth century, when England itself was still taking shape. The village first appears in a charter from around AD 772, where it is recorded as AEwille — a straightforward name for a modest settlement, but clearly one important enough to put on parchment. By the time of the Domesday Book in 1086, it was known as Ewell or Etwelle and had grown into a thriving community. Records describe a manor house, five busy watermills turning along the River Dour, and about fifty homes clustered around a small wooden Saxon church. Farmers, millers and craftspeople lived and worked there, shaping the character of the valley long before anyone worried about the morning commute. The village then belonged to Bishop Odo, the powerful half-brother of William the Conqueror, placing Temple Ewell firmly within the wider story of Norman England.



A new chapter began in 1163, when the Crown granted the manor of Ewell to the Knights Templar in recognition of their courage and service during the Crusades. The village's fortunes became entwined with one of the most famous — and mysterious — orders in medieval Christendom. "Temple" was added to its name, leaving a rather more enduring mark than the average change of ownership. The order established a preceptory here: an administrative and spiritual headquarters for the region's monastic knights. Its preceptor held authority over the brethren and answered only to the order's Grand Master. Around 1170, the Templars built the sturdy Norman church of St Peter and St Paul. Its stone walls and arches replaced the earlier wooden church and reflected the village's growing importance. The church still stands today, a tangible link to the past and to the prayers,

hopes and struggles of many generations.

When the Templars were dissolved in 1312, Temple Ewell did not quietly disappear from the map. The village passed instead to the Knights of St John of Jerusalem, another prominent military and religious order devoted to faith, service and care. They held the manor for more than two centuries, providing continuity through periods of upheaval, until Henry VIII's dissolution of the monasteries in 1540 swept away many of England's old religious institutions.

New Neck Crosses

As you know, the Grand Master has notified us that we should all adopt a single, uniform neck cross worldwide, which differs from the Maltese Cross traditionally worn by the Grand Priory of England. In recent years, each Priory and Grand Priory has tended to wear its own distinct style of neck cross, and this variation, while well-meant, has also highlighted differences between us.

The Grand Master wishes to bring us closer together through a shared and recognisable symbol. A uniform neck cross will not only present a more cohesive image of our Order but will also foster a stronger sense of inclusivity and unity among all Priories and Grand Priories.

The new Neck Cross is priced at £24.99, with the option of a velvet presentation box for an additional £5.00. This box not only presents the Neck Cross beautifully but also protects it and keeps it in excellent condition for years to come.

Click [HERE](#) to order your new Neck Cross



BANK ACCOUNTS

MAIN BANK ACCOUNT

Sort Code: 23-05-80
Account Number: 57836601

CHARITY BANK ACCOUNT

Sort Code: 23-05-80
Account Number: 57836598

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