

era in which all the previous degrees took place to one of a more recent period, that of the Crusades. While the Commandery does not prohibit membership based on religion, it does require members to defend the Christian Religion and to uphold Christian Values. The Order of Malta and the Order of the Temple complete the York Rite.

Together, the York Rite is the oldest of the Masonic Rites. Under the United Grand Lodge of England, the mother Lodge of the world no Mason can take any other degrees until he has at least taken the Royal Arch Degree.



Ask a York Rite Mason for a Petition Today,  
and Complete YOUR Journey for Further Light.

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*Congratulations!*



*On Being Raised to the Sublime Degree  
of  
Master Mason*

After months or years of waiting. After the memory work to learn the lessons taught. After enduring the seemingly endless examinations you have finally been received and recognized as a Master Mason. You have joined a fraternity of over one million men who, like yourself were, and still are seeking a way to improve yourself. After all this what were you told? 'You are not yet in possession of all the secrets of a Master Mason, neither do I know that you ever will be.' Whoa, is this any way to talk to a new Master Mason? And then to top it off you were given, not the Master Mason's Word, but 'a substitute until the true word can be found.'

This was not done to tease you, nor was it done to belittle you. It was to teach you a lesson that the quest for knowledge, and self improvement never ends. It is a life long journey that you have control of. You must now make the decisions that will further shape your life, and seek answers from those who have preceded you on this same journey.

As you contemplate which paths to take to gain further knowledge, I ask that you consider the York Rite Degrees. You have already started on this path, having taken the first three degrees which were given under the York Rite. In continuing your Masonic advancement within the York Rite you will discover, not only the true Master Mason's Word, but a further explanation as to the symbols, lessons, and 'secrets' of the work you have already progressed through.

The York Rite consists of thirteen progressions, or degrees divided into four distinct and separate bodies. The first three degrees, Entered Apprentice, Fellowcraft, and Master Mason are contained in the Symbolic, or Blue Lodge and lay the perfect foundation on which to build.

Four degrees are in the Chapter of Royal Arch which from the beginning of Freemasonry serves to complete the Master Mason Degree. Progressing through the Mark Master, Past Master, Most Excellent Master, and the Royal Arch degrees you will discover the meaning behind the symbols and allegories of the first three degrees. It is here that you will discover the *true* Master Mason's Word.

In the Council of Cryptic Masons you discover how and why the secrets of Freemasonry were preserved. In the Royal Master and Select Master Degrees you get to have a conversation with our Grand Master Hiram Abif. These are the only degrees in all of Masonry where this occurs. The Super Excellent Master Degree portrays the destruction of the Temple and captivity of the Jewish people that lead to the years of destitution before the start of the second Temple.

The final body that makes up the York Rite is the Commandery of Knights Templar. Here there are no degrees, rather you progress through a series of three different Orders. The Illustrious Order of the Red Cross serves as a bridge between the