



Most Illustrious Prince Hall Grand Council of Texas

Royal & Select Masters, Prince Hall Affiliated



Annual Allocution OF THE Most Illustrious Grand Thrice Illustrious Master

February 4, 2023

Killeen, Texas

To the Most Worshipful Grand Master, the Honorable Wilbert M. Curtis, Right Illustrious Grand Deputy Master, Rashad Sabree, Right Illustrious Grand Principal Conductor of the Work, Julius Wright, Most Illustrious Grand Thrice Illustrious Master Emeritus Troy A. Cousin, Honorary Past Grand Thrice Illustrious Masters, Elected and Appointed Officers of the Most Illustrious Prince Hall Grand Council Royal & Select Masters of Texas, Thrice Illustrious Masters, Illustrious Masters, Past Thrice Illustrious Masters, Deputy Masters, Principal Conductors of the Work, and Illustrious Companions, To the General Conference Illustrious Thrice Grand Master, Frederick Joyner, and Officers of the General Conference of Grand Councils Royal & Select Masters, Prince Hall Affiliation, United States of America, and the Bahamas. To SGIG Elvis Irby, Deputy of the Orient, and Council of Deliberation officers, Knight Bernard Samuel, Eminent Prior and the Officers of Ivory Johnson, Jr. Priory #20, Right Eminent Sir Knight William "Billy" Paige, Grand Commander and the Grand Officers of the Lone Star Commandery, Most Excellent Companion Michael Berry, Grand High Priest and the Grand Officers of the Most Excellent Prince Hall Grand Chapter, Holy Royal Arch Masons of Texas, Grand Officers of the Most Worshipful Prince Hall Grand Lodge of Texas, Honored and Distinguished Guests;

Greetings.

Pursuant to Article IX, Section 14 in the Constitution of the Most Illustrious Prince Hall Grand Council Royal & Select Masters of Texas, it is now my duty and responsibility, to render unto this Most Illustrious Body, the Annual Allocution of the Most Illustrious Grand Thrice Illustrious Master.

I thank God for allowing me to Stand before you today, It is my prayer at this very moment that he continues to guide my steps and strengthens me as I deliver my first ever Address to the members present at this, our 5th Grand Assembly. To ensure that strength I ask that our Right Illustrious Grand Chaplain to render a prayer, asking that all we do and say be pleasing in his sight.

Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. James 5:16 KJV)

I must say that this Year has been a prayer filled one. I prayed, that we would never again, have to host a virtual Grand Assembly. I prayed, for clarity and strength. I prayed, for knowledge and understanding, I prayed for peace, and I prayed for all of the Illustrious Companions of this Jurisdiction. I know that some of you were praying with me, and for me. My Faith has been increased tremendously, in that ole saying "PRAY CHANGES THINGS." This Cryptic year started with a considerable amount of uncertainties. Many of us were still dealing with the awful effects of the pandemic. A paradigm shift had occurred. Everything about our lives has forever changed. Our priorities changed. We talk differently, we love differently, and we spend our time and our money differently. We took an assessment of what was most important and focused our attention on those things. For some, the work within the secret vault became idle and sometimes excluded from our "things to do list." I was consistently reminded of something written in our Blue Lodge Ritual. It reads: men came and went like fleeting generations; seasons fled like hours;

but through the tempest and storm, through the attrition of the waves and sands of life, through good report and bad, it has continued to shed its beneficent influence wider over the earth. The work of this Most Illustrious Prince Hall Grand Council continues to move forward. We rolled out our Cryptic Rite Educational System by administering an exam to all the Illustrious Companions throughout the Jurisdiction. Much thanks to Right Illustrious Grand Deputy Master Rashad Sabree and Right Illustrious Grand Principal Conductor of the Work Julius Wright for their assistance. Our efforts were well received, and it gave the Illustrious Companions an opportunity to gain a greater understanding of the ritualistic work of the Cryptic Rite, and a better understanding of the laws and regulations, by which this Grand Council operates. We pushed that the degrees of Royal Master and Select Master are not to be given at the same time and that a proficiency test be submitted by those individuals receiving the degree, a practice that was already in place long before I took the helm. This is to make sure that we are conveying the value of the beautiful lessons that are contained in each degree. It should never be our intent to send Newly Advanced and Greeted Illustrious Companions away from our Council with and inadequate understanding of the Cryptic Rite. It should be every Illustrious Companion's desire to have the ability to hold meaningful conversations about the Royal and Select Master's degrees. It is in no way conducted to delay an individual progression further into the York Rite System. Our Right Illustrious Grand Recorder HPGTIM Ronald D. Gerac rolled out a well-constructed presentation on how Councils should fill out and submit their AAMD reports to include any additional information that needs to be sent forward to the Grand Council. We rolled out our Online Store, an easy and efficient way to meet the needs of the Illustrious Companions. The Right Illustrious Grand Captain of the Guard John B. Love III went to work submitting the Paperwork to Gain 501©10 Status for our Adoniram Institute. We may one day see the entire York Rite Weekend completely sponsored by the Adoniram Institute. Illustrious Companions, we have Wrought our regular Hour in the Secret Vault, at night when prying eyes are closed in Sleep. Our knees may be sore, but we have moved in Silence and Secrecy, and the great ALPHA AND OMEGA has heard our prayer. There is still much work to be done. The successes of this Grand Council rests solely in the hands of the individuals seated here in this Grand Assembly today. Let our prayer now be, that we recommit ourselves to the work. Let us pray that we find our hands busy supporting our communities, mentoring our youth, and assisting those affected by domestic violence. Most of all, let our prayer be for the well-being of ALL OUR Illustrious Companions and this Most Illustrious Prince Hall Grand Council of Royal and Select Masters

In my capacity as Most Illustrious Grand Thrice Illustrious Master, I have attended several meetings and events in the "Country of Texas" and beyond during the 2022-2023 Cryptic Years.

OFFICIAL ACTS:

1. I have issued several dispensations to regale as Royal and Select Masters, for meeting times and date changes, Proclamations, Edicts and Directives.
2. I have "set to work" Abiding Council U.D., in Duncanville, Texas

STATE OF THE NATION:

Early morning, February 26th, the Russians began shooting rockets into the territory of Ukraine, devastating a country. The war still rages on. In April, Ketanji Brown Jackson was confirmed as a Justice of the United Supreme Court. "The First Black Female Justice." In May, right here on Texas soil, a gunman killed 19 students and two teachers in Uvalde, Texas. On the 24th of June, the Supreme Court overturned Roe v. Wade, stirring up a whirlwind of discussions and concerns for women across this nation. In August, former President Donald Trump was in the news once again. His Mar-a-Lago Beach House was search for classified documents labeled "Top Secret." September brought much sadness for many with the loss of Queen Elizabeth II, while others took this moment to expose the racism during here reign. In November, we headed to the polls and the "red wave" that was being predicted fizzled, leaving the Republicans with a very slim majority. On December 9th, after 10 months of being locked away behind

the steel bars of a Russian prison, Brittney Griner was released. The country gave Russia in return a notorious arms dealer. Just a few days ago, a gang of police officers in Memphis, Tennessee, known as the “Scorpions,” beat to death 29-year-old, Tyre Nichols. They can be heard on video cracking jokes and laughing about the crime they had just committed. My prayers to the Nichols family. When will stories like this no longer be a part of the years in review?

STATE OF THE ORDER:

The Most Illustrious Prince Hall Grand Council Royal & Select Masters of Texas is alive and well.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That Abiding Council U.D. be given another year to develop.
2. That Any Illustrious Companion over the Age of 65 cannot be dropped from the rolls of their Council.
3. That we revise our current Super Excellent Masters Degree Ritual.
4. That our current scholarship application be put into circulation and made accessible to students through the state.
5. That the local council charity and community service hour report be made a mandatory submission. It will help support the evidence submitted, moving forward with regard to our 501© 10 status.

Yours by Sword and Trowel,

Most Illustrious Charles E. Lilley
Grand Thrice Illustrious Master
Most Illustrious Prince Hall Grand Council
Royal & Select Masters of Texas