



Grand Prelate's Monthly Message

OCTOBER 2023

Welcome to Autumn. Summer is over and we are now in the harvest season. As seasonal decorations begin to pop up all around us, one of the common images you will find is that of the Jack-O-Lantern: Those decorative, carved pumpkins that often adorn patios and doorways.

While jack-o-lanterns are not normally associated with Christianity, I am going to take a little bit of liberty, especially after a couple of messages I have recently heard and use the jack-o-lantern as a symbol of reminder for us of our relationship to our Lord and Savior, and an example of Christ's love for us. To do so we need to look at how a jack-o-lantern comes into being:

First, before a pumpkin becomes a jack-o-lantern, it must be chosen. Just as we go into a pumpkin patch to select a pumpkin, God looked down on this world and chose us. Next, it must be purchased at a price. You cannot simply take a pumpkin. You must pay the owner for it. We were paid for by the blood of Christ.

The next step is the cleaning of the pumpkin. Both the outside and the inside must be cleaned. After wiping down the pumpkin, it is then cut open and all the junk inside is cleaned out. In this same way, Christ cleanses us of all the junk in our lives that had kept us separated from God.

After that, a face is made in the pumpkin. One that the owner chooses to give the jack-o-lantern its identity. In this same way, our Lord gives us a new identity as a Child of God. We are no longer the same person we were before we entered into a new relationship with Christ.

Finally---and this is the point of this month's reflection---once the jack-o-lantern is complete, a candle, or a light, is placed inside of it. Why do people put a light in the jack-o-lantern? Because they know that it will be seen in the darkest night.

Sir-Knights, as believers in Jesus Christ, we have the light of Christ in us. That makes us the light of the world. Matthew 5:14-16 tells us, "Ye are the light of the world. A city set on a hill that cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a basket, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your father which is in heaven."

Just as the light emits from inside of a jack-o-lantern to make it visible to everyone, we need to live in a way that allows the Light of Christ to proceed from us into the dark world around us. The harvest is plentiful. There are many people who need help, even if it's as simple as giving them a kind word. Let the growing darkness of the winter remind you that we are the light of the world. Let us serve together to carry out the tasks the Lord has assigned us.

In Isaiah 6:8, the prophet said that he heard the Lord ask, "Whom should I send as a messenger to this people? Who will go for us?" Let our answer be the same as Isaiah's, "Here I am. Send me."

Always and All Ways in Christ,

Rick Saunders
Grand Prelate