

the
RITE
way forward



Massachusetts York Rite
186 Tremont St, Boston, MA 02111
Phone: (617) 426-1973



Massachusetts York Rite



Finish what you started.



Joining your lodge was only the start of an amazing journey. Now, it is time to finish what you started through membership in the York Rite



When you became a Freemason, you knew little about the world into which you were entering. The truth is, our fraternity's origins are unclear even to us. Over the centuries it has grown and shifted in countless ways and there are dozens of Masonic organizations to explore, join and lead.

The York Rite is one of the major branches of Freemasonry in the United States, primarily composed of three separate organizations which confer 10 degrees (plus three "chair" degrees for members who have led local bodies). Beyond that are more than two dozen other York Rite

organizations that expand our story, Masonic knowledge and friendship.

What makes the York Rite unique is that its Chapters, Councils, and Commanderies all function like local lodges. Eight of Ten degrees they confer speak directly to the story you began learning in your lodge, and start to answer questions such as:

- In the Third Degree, we are given a "substitute" word because the Master's Word is lost. What is the real Mason's Word?
- Why is Solomon's Temple considered the perfect construction project?
- Part of the job of the Senior Warden is "to pay the craft their wages if any be due." How is this done?
- What is a "key to a word" that is sought for in the Third Degree?
- In the Third Degree, we hear that the Temple is nearly complete. Was it ever finished? If so, what happened to it?
- What was on the Builder's mind when he died and what was he working on at the time?

To learn more, please visit www.MAYorkrite.org, call 617.426.1973 or email TheRiteWay@MAYorkRite.org



Royal Arch Masonry



When the two factions of Masonry in England merged in 1813 to create the United Grand Lodge of England, one area of compromise was the Royal Arch Degree, which the Ancients required but the Moderns did not. Their resolution was to include this statement in the Grand Constitution: "... pure Ancient Masonry consists of three degrees and no more, viz. those of the Entered Apprentice, the Fellow Craft, and the Master Mason including the Supreme Order of the Holy Royal Arch."

When the Ancients and Moderns merged in Massachusetts in 1792, this was not an area of contention, so lodges did not continue to confer the Royal Arch Degree. It was moved to Royal Arch Chapters, which also conferred the Mark Master Degree and the Most Excellent Master Degree. Actually, the major area of contention in the Massachusetts merger was the numbering of lodges, resulting in a compromise that Massachusetts lodges would not be numbered—a rarity in the Masonic world.



Today, Royal Arch Chapters confer four degrees:

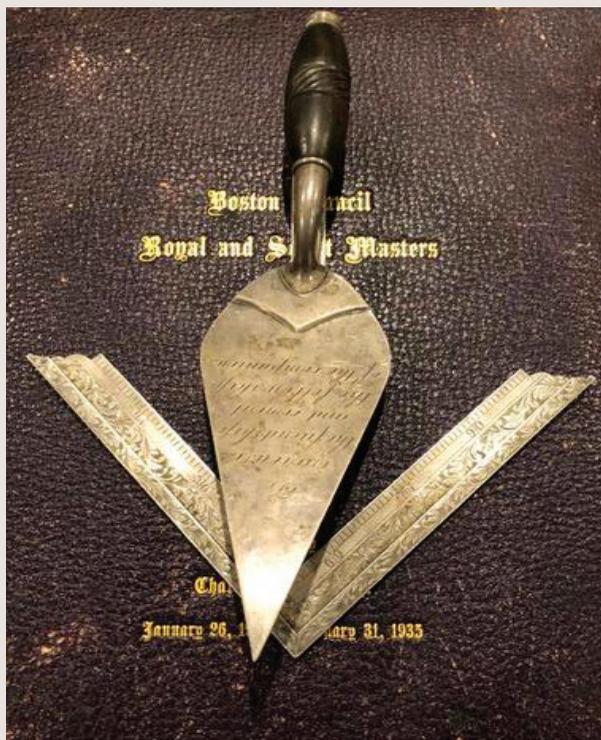
- The **Mark Master Mason Degree** teaches the use and lessons of the "Mark" each Craftsman used to distinguish his work in the erection of the Temple, and demonstrates how they received their wages.
- The **Past Master Degree** teaches that he who would rule over others must first learn to rule himself.
- The **Most Excellent Master Degree** is based on the completion and dedication of the Temple amid much rejoicing and great splendor. According to tradition, King Solomon instituted a new order of Masons on this occasion—called the Most Excellent Masters—to be conferred upon only those who through diligence and industry have advanced toward a more perfect life.
- The **Royal Arch Degree**, according to an ancient manuscript, "has always been considered more august, sublime and important than those which have preceded it and is the very summit of perfection in Ancient Masonry." With the discoveries of the missing sacred treasure at the rebuilding of the Temple of Solomon, that which was lost in the Master Mason Degree is restored to the Craft in a vivid portrayal of epic events.

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Councils of Royal and Select Master Masons



The word “cryptic” in Cryptic Masonry refers to the fact that two of the three degrees are conferred in a crypt—not that there are hidden meanings in the degrees.



- **The Royal Master Degree** chronologically precedes the Master Mason Degree. Its central figures are our Three Ancient Grand Masters and a Fellowcraft in search of that reward which would elevate him to the rank of Master Mason. It is the only degree in Freemasonry where the Candidate meets our Grand Master Hiram Abif.
- The **Select Master Degree** explains why King Solomon selected 24 true, tried and trusty Craftsmen to work with the Three Grand Masters to complete a vital section of the Temple. It rationally accounts for the concealment and preservation of those essential secrets brought to light in the Royal Arch Degree.
- The **Super Excellent Master Degree** teaches the beautiful symbolism of Faith, Friendship and Fidelity. Chronologically, this Degree concerns the siege and destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C., and the captivity of the Hebrew people in Babylon. This degree is typically conferred in its short form. The long form is a play that involves dozens of participants, and is exemplified every other year in Massachusetts.

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Commanderies of Knights Templar



The Masonic Knights Templar draw from the Medieval Monastic Order that participated in the Crusades. We wear uniforms and candidates are knighted during their initiation, but our focus is on perpetuating the chivalry and Christian virtues exemplified by our Medieval brethren.



- The **Illustrious Order of the Red Cross** is a simple but powerful testimony to the almighty force of TRUTH. It is designed to impress upon the candidate that there is but one God and that human nature changes little over great cycles of time.
- The **Order of Malta and the Mediterranean Pass** is rooted in the time of the Crusades, and assures safe passage to the Holy Sepulchre. At this period the members of our Order were known as Hospitallers who were famed for the construction and maintenance of hospitals for the poor.
- The **Order of the Temple** refers to its members as “Soldiers of the Cross.” Though not historically connected to the Knights Templar in the warring period of the Crusades, today it is motivated by the same principles—the protection of the weak and oppressed, the relief of the distressed, and the defense of the Christian religion.



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The York Rite Charities



GRAND CHAPTER

York Rite College Scholarships

All three York Rite Grand Bodies in Massachusetts offer college scholarships for York Rite Masons and members of their families. There are different eligibility requirements for each scholarship, but a number of students are helped every year.

Cotting School

www.cotting.org

The Cotting School serves the unique needs of students with a broad spectrum of learning and communication disabilities, physical challenges, and complex medical conditions by providing an array of integrated services.



GRAND COUNCIL

Monroe Scholarship

Given to someone pursuing a Master of Divinity Degree and subsequent ordination as a priest or minister.

GRAND COMMANDERY

The Knight Templar Eye Foundation

With \$135,000,000 in funding, this foundation supports the careers of clinical and basic researchers focused on the prevention and cure of potentially blinding diseases in infants and children. Grants range from endowing professorships to funding specific research projects.

Holy Land Pilgrimage

Each year, the Grand Commandery sponsors a clergy person to do a study tour of the Holy Land. This grant is intended for mid-career clergy and is meant to re-inspire them in their vocation.

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