



# IDAHO KNIGHTLY NEWS

Barry E. Newell, KTCH, KCT, Editor  
306 Maple St., Emmett, ID 83617  
ksigmason@gmail.com

## Editor's Note

If anyone would like to submit an article for the Idaho Knightly News, please email me your article using Microsoft Word. Keep it between 1 page and 1.5 pages.

## Upcoming Events:

Grand Encampment Triennial..... Aug 17-21  
Grand Commandery of CO..... Sep 5-7  
Grand Commandery of WY..... Sep 12-14  
Grand Lodge of Idaho..... Sep 19-21  
Northwest York Rite..... Oct 18-19

## St. Bernard of Clairvaux

By Barry E. Newell

St. Bernard of Clairvaux was a French abbot, reformer of the Cistercian order, influential in ending the persecution of Jews in Germany, served as an arbiter during a split in papal authority, preached in support of the Second Crusade, and is extremely important to the history of the Knights

Templar for obtaining Papal support and writing the original Rule of the Order.

St. Bernard was born around 1090 AD in Fontaines-les-Dijon (SE France) into a noble family. The son of Tocellyn de Sorrell and Aleth de Montbard, St. Bernard was the third of seven children. He was educated at Châtillon-sur-Seine, run by the secular canons of Saint-Vorles, which set him up for a life in the Church.

In 1107 St. Bernard's mother died and little is known of St. Bernard's early life. In 1112, St. Bernard, and several members of his family, rode to the abbey of Cîteaux, Dijon, seeking admission into the Cistercian order. On June 25, 1115, St. Bernard, receiving permission from Stephen Harding (St. Stephen), founded a new monastery in Burgundy, naming it Claire Vallée, which evolved into Clairvaux (meaning "Valley of Light"). As a young abbot, he became known as an excellent orator and author. He would become known as a champion of the Virgin Mary and define her role in the Catholic Church. Running the abbey was trying for St. Bernard initially and it took so much out of him that he became ill for a time. Though the Cistercian order was strict, many people flocked to the monastery, which included St.

Bernard's younger brother and father. Clairvaux became so crowded that St. Bernard began sending bands of monks throughout Germany, Sweden, England, Ireland, Portugal, Switzerland, and Italy to found new monasteries.

St. Bernard was connected to the Knights Templar through Hugh de Payens, the first Grand Master of the order was from the Champagne region of France and Andre de Montbard was his maternal uncle. Hugh, the Count of Champagne, became a member of the Knights Templars and was the one who donated the land on which the Abbey of Clairvaux was built. At the 1128 Council of Troyes, St. Bernard used his influence to use the council to garner support for the Knights Templar. St. Bernard created the first Rule of the Knights Templar from this council. The Rule covered all aspects of the life of the Knights Templar.

St. Bernard's influence and popularity in the Catholic Church began to grow immensely and he was instrumental in the election of Pope Innocent II in 1130. This election was very controversial and caused a schism in the Church. Several powers supported Anacletus II rather than Innocent II, the latter had been banned from Rome and was living in France. St. Bernard met with monarchs and then traveled through the Italian peninsula campaigning for Innocent II. The schism existed until January 25, 1138, when Anacletus died. It was during the papacy of Innocent II that the order was placed under the sole authority of the Pope. Due to St. Bernard's popularity, the Templar order grew and drew so many prominent noblemen.

In St. Bernard's "Liber ad milites templi de laude novae militiae" (Book to the

Knights of the Temple, in praise of the new knighthood), was a treatise that praised the soldier-monk, elevated them above the secular orders, and was meant to raise the morale of the Knights Templar in Jerusalem.

St. Bernard was sometimes referred to as a "Pope Maker" from his support of Innocent II and this would also be true in 1145 when he was active in the election of Pope Eugenius III (a novice of St. Bernard). St. Bernard wrote the "Books of Consideration" which discussed reforms of the Church, but they needed to start with the papacy. So beautiful was St. Bernard's writings on the papacy that many Popes kept this book for everyday reading.

St. Bernard died on August 20, 1153, in Clairvaux. He was canonized as a Saint by Pope Alexander III on January 18, 1174; he was also the first Cistercian monk to be placed on the calendars of saints. In Dante Alighieri's "Divine Comedy", St. Bernard serves as the last guide for Dante as he travels through the Empyrean, the highest part of Heaven. In 1792 after the French Revolution, St. Bernard's remains were transferred to the Troyes Cathedral. In 1830, Pope Pius VIII honored St. Bernard with the title of "Doctor of the Church." Due to his writing skills and his eloquent speaking, there is not enough time to cover every aspect of St. Bernard's life, but it should be remembered that he played an important role in the ascension of the Knights Templar as the premier knighthood during the Crusades.