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Companions,

November brings us to Thanksgiving, and this time of year naturally turns our thoughts to gratitude. Before the rush of the holidays takes hold, we are given a chance to pause, to look back over the year, and to give thanks for the blessings we have received, our families, our friendships, our health, and the fellowship we share in our Chapters across Kansas.

I am especially thankful for the lessons that Royal Arch Masonry teaches us, lessons that stay with a man long after the Chapter has closed.

The Mark Master degree teaches us the dignity of honest labor, that every workman is worthy of his hire, and that the work we do, seen or unseen, matters. The Past Master degree teaches humility in leadership, that a man must learn to govern and also learn to be governed. The Most Excellent Master degree teaches dedication, the satisfaction of seeing a great work completed and dedicated with joy.

And the Royal Arch degree itself teaches perseverance. Our Companions in the legend dug through rubble and ruin and recovered that which was thought to be lost. It reminds us that truth is never truly lost, that what is most valuable is often buried under the hard seasons of life, and that no Companion has to make that search alone.

Those are lessons to carry to our Thanksgiving tables. Be thankful for your labor and do it well. Be humble in the offices you hold. Finish what you have dedicated yourselves to. And when life feels like rubble, keep digging, together, in the faith that what was lost can be found again.

I am thankful for each of you, for the Chapters you serve, and for the families who support you in this work. May you and your loved ones have a blessed and happy Thanksgiving.

Fraternally,

Gary B. Strout

Gary B. Strout, Ed.S.
Most Excellent Grand High Priest, 2026-2027
Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Kansas