



## Fourth District Annual Meeting

Sunday, April 12, 2026

### Lecture – A Season of Renewal: A Spring Reflection on our Why

Today, I invite you to walk with me, for a brief moment, into a space of reflection—quiet, honest, and purposeful. The question before us is simple, yet profound: Why are you still here? Not merely present in body, seated in this room—but here in commitment, here in spirit, here in the purpose of our Order.

Each of us once wended the labyrinth, stood and faced the East looking up to the Worthy Matron and Worthy Patron. We were curious and perhaps even inspired to stand in that position of leadership one day. Others possibly joined the Order of the Eastern Star with expectations of sisterhood and brotherhood and of participating in community service. Some may have seen something noble in it and still a select few might have even had several questions about the so called secret society they just joined.

But time has passed. Seasons have changed. And so I ask again: Why are you still here? What did you join to do? Are you here because of family obligation? Because somewhere along the journey, you found purpose? Or, because the principles we profess; charity, truth and loving kindness have taken root within you?

It is important that we each revisit our “why,” because if our “why” is left unattended, our original purpose could just fade away.

And now I ask you: Is the Order what you thought it would be?

For some, the answer may be yes. For others, perhaps not entirely. But therein lies a deeper truth: the Order is not simply what we find in it is what we build it to be. It is shaped by our participation, our attitudes, our willingness to serve beyond titles or positions and beyond recognition.

If the Order has fallen short of your expectations, then perhaps the greater question here is what have you and what have we contributed to its evolution? We now stand at the edge of a new season, the dawn of new administrations, a moment much like the arrival of Spring.

Spring is a season of renewal. It does not ask permission to begin again; it simply does. It breaks through the cold of winter, bringing life where there once was stillness. It calls forth growth, even from what seemed dormant. In quite the same way, this new season in our chapters is not merely a change in leadership; it is an opportunity for renewal in spirit, in purpose, and in action.

So now I ask you to consider: What are you willing to bring to your chapters?

Will you bring renewed commitment? Fresh ideas? A spirit of unity? A willingness to mentor, to learn, to forgive or to grow? Or will you carry forward the weight of past disappointments, unmet expectations, and continue to hold grudges to create divisions that hinder progress?

Spring teaches us that growth requires release. Trees do not bloom while clinging to last season’s leaves. Likewise, we cannot move forward effectively if we remain anchored in what was.

For the betterment of our chapters and Grand Chapter, each of us must make a conscious decision: to be contributors, not merely consumers; to be builders, not just observers.

The future of this Order does not rest solely in the hands of leadership; it rests in the collective passion of its membership.

So, I leave you with this charge:

Reflect deeply on why you are still here. Reconnect with the purpose that first brought you through the labyrinth to face the East. As we enter this new season, the Spring, commit yourself to being an instrument of progress, renewal, and contributions.

Because just like Spring, the vitality of our Order depends on what each of us is willing to nurture.

*Fraternally,*

*Sister Monica Michelle Smith*

*Grand Assistant Lecturer*

*Oziel Grand Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star, P.H.A.*