

Leading Knight Charge

The emblem of this station is the Flag of **our** Country and its motto is Charity, the cornerstone of every Elk structure, the highest virtue of every Elk creed.

The daily gifts we bestow increase **our** own riches. The help we extend to those in need is added to **our** own strength. The witchery of wealth is not in having, but in sharing. The real benefactors of mankind count their store in what is given, not in what is saved.

But, as Elks we teach not alone the charity of alms but the higher and nobler charity of thought, word and deed. **Our** whole influence in life is determined by the good deeds we do rather than by the emotions we feel. The kindest feeling may vanish the best resolve may be forgotten but the influence of a good deed, honestly and promptly performed, will continue forever.

There's a legend that in olden times a feast was laid on high Olympus for all the gods and thither each did bear the goddess of his highest choice, until the throng had filled the mountain top.

Wealth and Riches came resplendent in their robes of gold and Greed and Avarice their companions were. Peace came and all did wonder that she leant upon the arm of War. Justice and Mercy entered, and between them proudly walked the god of Right. Faith came with Doubt and Hope entered by the side of Fear.

Thus, each in turn until at last, uninvited and unattended, came sweet Charity, in flowing robes of purest white and in her arms she bore a wilderness of flowers, dear tokens of remembrance for them all.

Then Wealth and Riches drew their gorgeous robes aside, while Greed and Avarice protested loudly that one so poorly dressed should royal feast attend. Charity gave them answer soft and mild: "Have I in truth no welcome here, and is there none in all this company who will my companion be? Behold, I bring you sweetest flowers in offering and beg that you accept them from my hand. Royal robes would not befit me well, for what grace I have is not in figure nor in form. True, I come in simple raiment, unannounced, yet Misery and Want await me at the door. I speak to you of their distress, and argue for their cause.

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Where upon the gods with one acclaim did vote her purest, truest, noblest of all the Graces laden her with royal gifts, proffered her a crown and begged that she would sit upon the throne.

But she made them answer that she sought her throne not among the gods, but in the hearts of mankind; and commending kindly deeds unto them all, went again upon her way.

This legend teaches us that Charity is the greatest of all the virtues and that it should ever rule us in **our** hearts and in **our** lives, leading us to speak no unkind word, to harbor no evil thought, to bear no malice, to support no wrong; but to nurture, love and protect; to condone, forgive and forget.