

Love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong but rejoices in the right. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 The heroines of our Order, the Star Points are role models of Eastern Star teaching us about love.

Our first heroine is Adah, who honored her father's vow. Jephthah went to battle and vowed to God that if he was victorious in battle, he would sacrifice the first to greet him when he returned home. He was victorious, he won the battle, and who came exuberantly dancing to welcome him home? Her precious, beloved daughter, Adah, his only child. In this story, both Jephthah and Adah demonstrate Their unshakable love and trust in God. Adah demonstrated her love for her father by fulfilling his vow giving up her life to preserve his honor. This story personifies love and loyalty. Loyalty is fidelity and fidelity is a major component of love. Adah's emblem is the sword and veil united. The sword was used to end her life and Adah threw the veil off her face because she was not afraid to die.

Our second heroine is Ruth, who gave up her national heritage, her kindred and her friends to follow her husband's mother to Bethlehem. There in a strange land, in poverty, Ruth gleaned the fields for barley, a lowly, menial labor that barely supplied the sustenance to keep them alive. She loved and cherished her mother-in-law. She believed it was her duty to assist in Naomi's maintenance and history rewarded her, for Ruth became the Great Grandmother of David, Israel's greatest king. Jesus was of the house and lineage of David. Ruth was faithful, she was honorable, she was trustworthy. All these words mean constancy and constancy means love. Ruth's emblem is the sheaf, and we are reminded of the hours of patient industry it takes to gather a handful of spilled grain to supply the food needed to care for our elderly loved ones.

The story of Esther, our third heroine is a story of a Jewish girl in captivity who become the queen of the Persian Empire. As a Queen, she could have basked in her powerful position, but when informed of the plot to destroy her people, she approached her king under penalty of death, because women did not approach their king unsummoned, especially when he was on his throne during Grand Council. However, he absolved her by extending his scepter as she approached. Her people were saved. Esther had deep convictions, she put her trust in love, she believed that right and duty would be served, she was loyal to her people, she saved them from destruction. Convictions, trust, right and duty are loyalties, and loyalty is love. Esther's emblem is the crown and scepter which represents royalty and power.

We learn from Martha our fourth heroine, a lesson of faith and hope of immortality. Jesus befriended this family of Martha, her sister, Mary, and her brother Lazarus. While Jesus was away, Lazarus sickened and died. Martha believed with her heart, her mind and her soul that Christ was the Resurrection and the Life. But he didn't return until the fourth day after Lazarus' death. Things looked dark and discouraging, but Martha remained faithful and loyal to Jesus. "Were you here, Lord, you could have saved my brother," she said. Well, Jesus did save Lazarus, he raised him from the dead. Martha

had proof positive of eternal life. Martha demonstrated her faith in the Master. Faith is trust, hope, belief, confidence, and devotion. All of these words, especially faith, mean love. The emblem representing the story of Martha is the broken column which depicts the uncertainty of human life.

Our final heroine, Electa, was reared a Pagan and converted to the Christian religion. She gave of herself, answering the needs of those who passed her door. She took the poor into her home and ministered to them, sharing all her material possessions. The Roman Emperor issued an edict that all followers of Christ should renounce their faith or die. When the soldiers demand that Electa trample a cross under her foot, she couldn't defame that precious emblem of her Saviour's death. She pressed the cross to her heart and her persecution ended in death. Electa was filled with love for her fellow man. This love was demonstrated in her charity and hospitality, her mercy and compassion, and in her service to others. The emblem representing Electa's hospitality and charity, her service to those in need, is the cup. This cup is a reminder to us to extend aid to those who are victims of poverty and distress.

In the Bible we find God's revelation of Himself and His will to mankind. Some of the stories were recorded verbatim by memorization for over 1400 years before the written word. This Holy Book is the foundation for our beloved Eastern Star. In it we find these words about love. "Jesus said to the chief priests, the scribes, and the elders, there is no commandment greater than this, you shall love the Lord with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength, and you shall love your neighbor as yourself." Mark 12: 30-31. 1 Corinthians 13:13, So faith, hope, love abide, these three, but the greatest of these is love."

Installation Prologue, written by June C. Meikie 1997