



## Rose and Cross Symbolism

- Scott Rowe

The 18<sup>th</sup> Degree Knight Rose Croix is rich in symbolism and allegory on many levels. The degree openly teaches the importance of Faith, Hope and Charity and these virtues are to be tempered with Tolerance. No one should judge another's level of, or lack of, commitment to these principals but should be tolerant and accepting that every man must find his own path his own way.

On a more esoteric level, brethren who have studied or participated in the Rosicrucian teachings might see the prominent display of a Red Cross and Red Rose on the 18<sup>th</sup> Degree Jewel as an indication that these symbols refer to the tenets of the Rosicrucians. The Rose and Cross married together were one of the earliest symbols of the organization.

There is even a deeper meaning that traces its origin much further back to the practitioners of alchemy, if one possesses the knowledge to read the message as it was first intended to be communicated. Alchemists used the cross as a symbol of the crucible and a combination of an equilateral triangle surmounted by a cross was the secret symbol used for "Completion of the Great Work".



Significantly, it is interesting to note that the above symbol was once traditionally placed after the signature of graduate 18<sup>th</sup> Degree Knights of the Rose Croix. The cross and crucible had the same meaning just as the similarity between the Latin words crucifix and crucible had the same root origin.

On one level the rose has many openly noble interpretations and meanings which will be covered in a separate article. Esoterically the spelling **ROS**, obviously closely related to the ROSE, was the Greek word for 'dew'. Hence one could say that **ROS-I-CRUCIAN** literally means the "dew crucible" or more meaningfully the "dew chalice". Dew is one of the most important ingredients in many steps of practical alchemy and its collection represents a pure form of water unobtainable in any other way.

Taking these two familiar Scottish Rite symbols together and looking at them alchemically gives the astute observer a whole new meaning.