

The Chaplain's Resource Manual

Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States

Information - Prayers – Resources



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THE CHAPLAINCY

(Background History)

During times of turmoil and war, mankind always looks to religion and religious figures for comfort. Both ancient and modern societies have turned to religion and communities have extended the comfort of religion to those serving in the heat of battle. Priests and other religious figures petitioned gods and spirits for victory in war. The Scriptures often refer to priests accompanying troops into battle. (see: *Deut. 20: 2-4; Joshua 6: 2-5*).

The modern chaplaincy's roots and origin are essentially in the medieval church. The word chaplain dates from this period. A fourth century story tells of the pagan Roman soldier called Martin of Tours. As Martin and his men were returning from the battlefield in the middle of a severe winter, they met a shivering beggar at the city gate of Amiens. Martin had compassion on the beggar. He cut his cloak in two parts and gave one to the beggar. That night he had a vision of Christ wearing the beggar's cloak. As a result, Martin converted to Christianity. Martin enraged Emperor Julian by saying, "*Hitherto I have served you as a soldier; allow me now to become a soldier to God...*" The Emperor later released him from the army. He was baptized and in 371, the people of Tours were so impressed by his holy life and miracles, they made him their Bishop.

Martin of Tours later became the patron saint of France and his cloak, considered a holy relic, was carried into battle by Frankish kings. This cloak was called in Latin the "*cappa*." Its portable shrine was called the "*cappalla*" and its caretaker priest, the "*cappellanus*". Eventually, all clergy affiliated with the military were called "*capellani*," or in French, "*chapelains*," hence chaplains. The Council of Ratisbon (742) first officially authorized the use of chaplains for armies, but prohibited "the servants of God" from bearing arms or fighting.

However, religious figures in this era often went into battle as fighting men with the army. The conflict between the religious function and the military role can be seen in the career of the patron saint of military chaplains, St. John Capistrano, who besides serving as a Church Diplomat led the army at the Battle of Belgrade in 1456. This European tradition extended to colonial America where the chaplain both fought alongside and ministered to his neighbors in the militia. The tradition in colonial America of the fighting chaplain began changing. After the Civil War, chaplains were no longer permitted to carry weapons. And today, chaplains are supposed to be issued a Geneva Convention Identity Card. Chaplains are ordained clergy, endorsed by their faith group to serve all people, regardless of religious or non-religious affiliation.

THE UNITED STATES MILITARY CHAPLAINCY

THE ARMY: Chaplains had no role in the United States Army until 1791. However, colonial clergymen frequently raised military units from their own congregations and communities, and often led them in battle. A number of New England clerics served at Concord. Some even shouldered their muskets and fought alongside their fellow soldiers.

The first appointed Army Chaplain was Rev. John Hurt in 1791. He had already served seven years during the Revolutionary War. "The history of the Chaplaincy from this time on (*until the Civil War*) is full of uncertainties."

During the War of 1812, Chaplain James J. Wilmer was the only chaplain known to have died during this war. During the Civil War the Army Chaplaincy developed many procedures still in place. Most chaplains became less a “fighting parson,” and more “spiritual” in their emphasis. The Civil War witnessed for the first time, a large number of Roman Catholic chaplains in the field. It was also during the Civil War that we read of the first Jewish chaplains and the first Black and Indian chaplains. During the Civil War Four Army Chaplains were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

The act of 1883 mandated that the chaplain should also “perform the duties of schoolmaster” at the Post. Additionally, chaplains generally held services in civilian settlements; established Indian congregations; officiated at functions; visited the sick, prisoners and soldiers in barracks; served as post gardeners; and, occasionally as legal counsel.

World War I and II had thousands of chaplains from various faith groups serving the spiritual needs of the fighting men. Today, the Army Chaplains continue to serve the men and women of the United States Army, National Guard, and Reserves with spiritual and moral support.

THE NAVY: The Navy Chaplaincy dates back to the Continental Navy. What was critical was that the Continental Congress adopted regulations which provided a place for religion and the chaplain in the Navy. Using the guidelines of the “Mother Country,” Divine Services were written into the Navy Regulations. However, few ships were authorized to be built and thus there were few Navy Chaplains. Rev. Benjamin Balch was the first Chaplain known to have served in the Continental Navy. From 1785 to 1798, there was no American Navy and, therefore, no Navy Chaplains.

The first Navy Chaplain to die as the result of enemy action was Chaplain John L. Lenhart, who was on board the *Cumberland* when she was rammed and sunk by the CSS Virginia (formerly called the *Merrimack*).

With a new edition of the Navy Regulations in 1802, additional duties of chaplains stated that they should “perform the duty of schoolmaster, instructing midshipmen...” The Navy Chaplain had to be a teacher of writing, mathematics, navigation, and whatever else they might need to make them proficient, besides his religious duties. That did not change much until 1906 when the Navy established certain guidelines that eliminated the teaching function and established procedures and qualifications for Navy Chaplains and the establishment of the Chaplain Corps.

Navy Chaplains have served with distinction during WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, and Iraqi Freedom. Navy Chaplains provide ministry to all the sea services, including, the *Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, Sea Bees, and Merchant Marine*

To recount the history of the Chaplain Corps and omit two of its most revered Navy chaplains would be a grave mistake. Chaplains Joseph T. O’Callahan and Vincent Capodanno were both awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

THE AIR FORCE: Before 1939, the Army’s air arm was a fledgling organization. By the end of the end of WW II, the Army Air Forces had become a major military organization comprised of many air forces, commands, divisions, wings, groups, and squadrons, plus an assortment of

other organizations. The National Security Act of 1947 became law on July 26, 1947. It created the Department of the Air Force, headed by a Secretary of the Air Force. From this beginning grew the Air Force Chaplaincy. At first the Air Force Chaplains received their training at the Army School and eventually established their own school.

TODAY'S CHAPLAIN

Today, the Chaplain is a highly respected and integral part of all branches of the military. You will find the Chaplain in many of the Fortune 500 companies of our great nation, as well as in police departments, fire departments, hospitals and emergency crews. Often called upon to minister to families in times of grief, marital, and family situations. The Chaplain is a friend and colleague who can be counted on when the need arises.

One of the modern day Chaplain's major purposes is to help individuals grow in their relationship to the Creator God and to one another. The Chaplain helps to develop an environment in which those who are served can grow personally, spiritually, and morally.

The Chaplain is non-denominational and non-sectarian. This means the Chaplain cannot pick and choose those he or she will minister to, but regardless of race, religious belief, or color, the Chaplain will do everything possible to minister to the needy.

POST CHAPLAIN

You were elected to the office of Post Chaplain and you have an important responsibility to your Post. Whether you have been selected for your religious training, or past VFW experiences, you are expected to be the spiritual advisor to your Post and its members.

As Post Chaplain, you are encouraged to perform your duties to the utmost of your abilities. Feel free to utilize this handbook in the performance of your duties.

PURPOSE OF CHAPLAINS

The office of Chaplain is not just to provide a "religious" officer to the organization to offer prayers at meetings. The Chaplain has loftier purposes:

- 1- To help persons grow as individuals and particularly in their relationship with God.
- 2- To help persons grow in their relationships to one another and become a true comrade to one another.
- 3- To serve as a reminder of the transcendent in life,

- 4- To develop an environment with which comrades are encouraged in their personal and collective moral and spiritual growth.
- 5- To remind all Americans that God is the source of all rights and privileges.

We must be reminded that the Veterans of Foreign Wars is comprehensive in nature, embracing all religions and faith groups within its ranks. The Chaplain, being non-sectarian and non-denominational, must minister to the spiritual needs of all without regard to either affiliation or non-affiliation. For many people, the only religious contact they will have will be with the Chaplain. Chaplains will need to provide ministry to people wherever there is a need.

QUALIFICATIONS OF CHAPLAINS

The qualifications for the Veterans of Foreign Wars Chaplain are not academic or ecclesiastical. A VFW Chaplain candidate is not required to be a “professional” clergy person (most Post Chaplains are not). The qualifications are simple yet important:

1. A willingness to serve the office.
2. A commitment to provide a Chaplain’s ministry.
3. Should have a good self image and a positive attitude
4. A caring person.
5. A desire to help people.
6. A sense of spiritual maturity.
7. The ability to keep things confidential.
8. Willing to be neutral and objective when settling disputes.
9. Voice projection and the ability to read well in public.
10. Chaplains should be proud of their office and determined to do a good job.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHAPLAIN

No matter where the people served are coming from, they perceive the Chaplain as their Pastor. Therefore, Chaplains are called to nurture the living, care for the dying, and honor the dead. In a non-sectarian manner, you should be prepared to listen to your fellow comrades and their family members, and provide aid and spiritual comfort in times of stress, sickness, or bereavement.

1. **SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE:** The Chaplain is available to help individuals and their families with their spiritual needs.
2. **ASSISTANCE IN EMERGENCY SITUATIONS:** In times of crises such as hospitalization, injury, or death, the Chaplain will help and provide assistance to veterans and their families.

3. **CONDUCTING/ASSISTING AT FUNERALS:** The Chaplain is available to assist families with funeral arrangements and to officiate at the service or assist the family minister. Additionally, the Chaplain can help with organizing an honor guard, having a bugler present at the cemetery, and having a presentation of the flag as a token of service and honor on behalf of the VFW Post and fellow veterans of military service.
4. **WEDDINGS:** The Chaplain is available to assist with weddings. When properly credentialed, the Chaplain is available to conduct weddings.
5. **COUNSELING:** The Chaplain is available to provide pastoral care and counsel and when necessary to help veterans and their families find appropriate resources for dealing with such issues as post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse, or other critical incident stress management problems.
6. **VISITATION:** Visitation with veterans and their families to provide comfort and encouragement is an important function of the Chaplain.
7. **ATTENDING FUNCTIONS:** The Chaplain may be called upon to represent the Post at official functions or public meetings, and asked to give invocations, dedicatory prayers, or benedictions. Participation in Parades, 9/11 Memorial Services, Veterans Day Programs/Services, and POW/MIA Services will also be expected.

ADDITIONAL DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Work with your Service Officer to help members and their families receive available VA Benefits.
2. Your Post Commander or Officers may come to you in confidence. Remember the privileged communication you are having is for your ears only. Keep such things confidential and uphold the high ideals of the organization in any advice you offer.
3. You should be prepared to offer the ritual prayers at each meeting of the Post. You will also be called upon to offer appropriate prayers at the initiation of new members; installation of officers; the dedication of a building, monument, or colors; or at the memorial service of a comrade. All such services are commemorated by use of the VFW or Ladies Auxiliary ritual.
4. Being a member of the Post's Memorial Team will provide an opportunity for contact with the grieving family and thus provides a caring ministry to them.
5. Use the persuasion of your office to promote harmony and unity in the Post.
6. Provide inspirational articles for the post newsletter.

REMEMBER!

1. The Chaplain, being on the staff of the Commander, is to serve as the spiritual advisor for all members of the Post.
2. The Chaplain should be present at all Post events.
3. The Chaplain offers all the prayers at the Post meeting, but that is not the total work or the main work of the Chaplain.
4. The Chaplain should always be aware of the ecumenical nature of the Post's membership and offer appropriate non-sectarian prayers.
5. Utilize this booklet and the Chaplain's Handbook. The prayers are intended to provide the Chaplain with a guide to offering prayers. Modify the prayers to your need at the event or to wording that would be more appropriate.
6. Believe that the chaplaincy is essential to the work of the Veterans of Foreign Wars. The position is an important one and each Chaplain should take pride in serving God, Country, Veterans, and their families.

PRAYERS FOR VARIOUS OCCASIONS

PRAYERS OF INVOCATION (Opening)

(Opening of Post/District/Convention Meeting) Lord, You are Creator of all that is. We come into Your presence this day with thankful hearts. We give thanks to You for the bounty of Your blessings, for the sharing between peoples, for the love of families, friends, comrades and sisters. O God, we ask Your strength and guidance throughout this day, that we may do our best to serve You and represent our respective Posts. Grant that Your blessings upon this (convention/meeting), each participant, and the work they represent. **Amen.**

Almighty God, who's great Commandment is that we shall love our neighbors as ourselves, and who has taught us that we should do to others as we would have them do to us, we ask Your blessing upon the work of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in the Department of _____. As our purpose is to help our fellow citizens and especially those who have served this Nation with honor in time of conflict, and to promote all that serves well our communities and our State and nation, so we pray that You will enlighten our minds with a clear vision of Your will for us, inspire our determination to follow that vision of Your will in our deliberations, and strengthen our hands in all our undertakings. May the programs developed here inspire and enrich the lives of our fellow citizens; may the dedication offered here be a source of strength on our communities; that our work may bear fruit worthy of our ideals and aspirations under You, O Father. In You Holy Name we pray. **Amen.**

Almighty God, in whom we live and move and have our being, we come into Your presence in hope and thanksgiving. We commit ourselves into Your loving hands and in Your mercy. We ask Your blessings upon us, Your servants of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, and especially our

_____. Give him/her wisdom and guidance as he/she endeavors to serve our fellow veterans. Help us all to live our lives that we may be worthy children of Your family. Help us to be good neighbors. Where we have trespassed against them and sinned against You, we ask Your pardon and forgiveness. For these and all good gifts, we thank You. In Your Name we pray. **Amen.**

Almighty God, we thank You for bringing us together this day. Inspire us to worthy deeds and sound decisions and direct us toward the attainment of our goal. We pray that You would bless and protect all of our people. Guide us on the path to unity and harmony that we may serve You and Your people in keeping with Your Holy Will. **Amen.**

With humble hearts and a sense of our responsibility, yet proud of the confidence placed in us by our comrades of the Veterans of Foreign Wars; with hearts grateful for the rich heritage bequeathed to us by our fathers, yet also determined to be ever vigilant to preserve it, we ask Your blessings, O God, on this conference (meeting), that it may be fruitful in its accomplishments and lasting in the good it effects. Be with us, O God, in our deliberations. Inspire us with Your wisdom, direct us in our thinking, and guide us as we work for You, our Nation, and our comrades. **Amen.**

Be with us, O Lord, as we gather for this important conference (convention/meeting). May Your wisdom and counsel guide us as we seek to develop and authorize programs to benefit the citizens and especially the veterans of this great land.

Teach us to think wisely and carefully before we speak, to act with courage and conviction for the good of all rather than simply for vested interests, and to deal charitable with one another that we may all continue to enjoy mutual respect.

So may we serve You in spirit and in truth that our accomplishments will be built upon the firm foundation of charity and justice. Thus may our work both in our public sessions and our committees bring credit to the Veterans of Foreign Wars and be of benefit to those we seek to serve, to Your great honor and glory. **Amen.**

(For the year completed) Our Father, we thank You for the year we have completed, for its successes, and for the strength You have given us to overcome its failures. As we face a new year together, give us patience and understanding for all our comrades, wisdom in our decisions, and Your aid in building a better Veterans of Foreign Wars organization. Bestow Your special blessings upon all who assume the duties of leadership. Walk with each of us in heart and mind, day by day, so that we may continue to serve our God and our Country. **Amen.**

(For Sunday) “This is the day that the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.” O Lord, we thank You for every day but especially for this day, The Lord’s Day. We thank You for the privilege of life and the blessings we enjoy through Your graciousness to our Country, the land in which we are given the freedom of speech, religion, and the pursuit of happiness. Assist us to know You better. Grant us the beauty of a humble spirit, the strong courage and will to continue to glorify You in what we do this day and every day. In Your Name we pray. **Amen.**

(Dedication of Post) O Eternal God, who has committed to us the swift and solemn trust of life, since we know not what a day may bring, but only that the hour for serving You is ever-present, may we wake to the instant claims of Your Holy Will, not waiting for tomorrow but responding today. We ask that You will move us to lay to rest the resistance of foolishness, indolence, selfishness, or fear for what the tomorrow may hold. Consecrate with Your presence and blessing the work of the Veterans of Foreign Wars and our Auxiliary in the Department of _____, and more especially in this Post. May the programs developed here be to Your everlasting glory and to the benefit of this community. May the fellowship enjoyed here ripen into life-long friendships, mutual respect, and love among us all. **Amen.**

(Dedication of Post) Our Gracious Father, You have cautioned us that You will require much of those to whom much is given: Grant that we, whose lot is cast in such goodly circumstance and so rich a heritage, may strive together through generosity, diligence, and our earnest labors, complete the tasks to which we have set our hands and the programs we have pledged to undertake. May the dedication of this Post home be a symbol and a reminder of our dedication to serve our God, our Country, our community, our State, our Nation, and the veterans of this great land in their need as we are able. All this we ask of You our Heavenly Father. **Amen.**

(Opening of Post/District/Convention Meeting) Lord, You are Creator of all that is. We come into Your presence this day with thankful hearts. We give thanks to You for the bounty of Your blessings, for the sharing between peoples, for the love of families, friends, comrades and sisters. O God, we ask Your strength and guidance throughout this day, that we may do our best to serve You and represent our respective Posts. Grant that Your blessings upon this (convention/meeting), each participant, and the work they represent. **Amen.**

(Opening of Post/District/Convention Meeting) Almighty God, who's great Commandment is that we shall love our neighbors as ourselves, and who has taught us that we should do to others as we would have them do to us, we ask Your blessing upon the work of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in the Department of _____.

As our purpose is to help our fellow citizens and especially those who have served this Nation with honor in time of conflict, and to promote all that serves well our communities and our State and nation, so we pray that You will enlighten our minds with a clear vision of Your will for us, inspire our determination to follow that vision of Your will in our deliberations, and strengthen our hands in all our undertakings. May the programs developed here inspire and enrich the lives of our fellow citizens; may the dedication offered here be a source of strength on our communities; that our work may bear fruit worthy of our ideals and aspirations under You, O Father. In You Holy Name we pray. **Amen.**

(Opening of Convention Meeting) Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, we ask Your blessing upon the Veterans of Foreign Wars and its work (in this State). We gather today (tonight) at this convention/conference to hear reports from the many committees which plan our programs and undertakings. May we learn from these reports not only what we are doing but what we must do to continue as effective servants of our veterans, our God and Country, and our community. Teach us anew the importance of working together as a team with a common goal. Warn us again against letting petty political concerns and self interests cloud our judgment. Encourage us yet once more with a vision of an America at peace both within our borders and without. Guide

our thoughts and our decisions, that we may effectively serve You, this Nation, and our fellow veterans in the days ahead. And may we know the blessings of Your presence in our deliberations. All this we ask in the Name of Lord God Almighty. **Amen.**

(Opening of Post/District/Convention Meeting) Guide us now in being friendly and generous toward one another. Instill in us faith and knowledge, and let all of us have the ability to live at peace within ourselves. O Lord, show the people of our Nation the right way to serve and guard the sacredness of all orderly freedoms. Let us realize that You have given us riches not given to any other nation under the sun, and let us be ever grateful, and accept the responsibilities which they entail. You are our God, and to You we would ascribe all glory and honor, now and forever. **Amen.**

(Opening of Post/District/Convention Meeting) O God our Heavenly Father, we pray that You will be with us at this time to guide our work in this (convention/meeting). Grant us the wisdom to seek Your will in all that we undertake, and the courage to follow in the direction You would have us to go. In seeking to serve our God and Country, may our efforts be of benefit to our fellow veterans and all the people of our community. We pray for peace, and we pray for all who serve the public that they may discharge their duties capably and with honor and dignity. We pray for our comrades and for all our fellow citizens that we may enjoy an even-handed justice in all our dealings; that we may always know the blessings of freedom purchased for us at so great a cost; that we may with loyalty serve this land in a true spirit of Democracy. Bless the United States of America, and grant that this Nation may live in peace among the nations of the world. We pray also, O Lord, for our comrades in hospitals or in homes, who are suffering from mental and physical illness or disability. Comfort them with a sense of Your continuing presence, cheer them with the knowledge of Your love, and grant them the blessings of health and happiness. All this we ask in Your Holy Name. **Amen.**

(Opening of Worship Service) Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the presence of Your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love You and glorify Your holy name. **Amen.**

(Opening of Church Worship Service) O God our Father, You have commanded the light to shine out of darkness and awakened us again to praise Your goodness and to ask Your favor. Accept now the sacrifice of our worship and thanksgiving. Make us to be children of the light and of the day, heirs of Your everlasting inheritance. Remember, O God, Your whole church and all our brothers (and sisters) who stand in need of Your favor on land or sea, in air or space. May our lives ever praise Your wonderful and holy name. **Amen.**

(Opening of Worship Service) Ever loving and Eternal God, Source of the light that never dims and of the love that never fails, Light of our lives, Father of our spirits, draw near us, and by the remembrance of Your ancient mercies, by the ministry of Your church, teach us and lead us nearer to You. By all our conflicts, by all our aspirations, by all our fears, by all our joys and sorrows, by life and death itself, teach us and lead us nearer to You. **Amen.**

(Opening of Worship Service) O God, who put into our hearts such deep desires that we cannot be at peace until we rest in You: mercifully grant that the longing of our souls may not go

unsatisfied because of any unrighteousness of life that may separate us from You. Open our minds to the counsels of eternal wisdom; breathe into our souls the peace which passes understanding. Increase our hunger and thirst for righteousness, and feed us, we beseech You, with the bread of heaven. Give us grace to seek first Your Kingdom, and help to grow as You add all things needful. **Amen.**

SPECIAL DAYS AND SEASONS

(Advent) Lord, You have given us the great hope that Your Kingdom shall come on earth, and Your Son has taught us to pray for its coming. Make us ready now to give thanks for the signs of its dawning, and to pray and work for that perfect day when Your will shall be done on earth as it is in Heaven. We ask this in the name of our Lord. **Amen.**

(Christmas) Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, we give You thanks that in the fullness of time the Light dawned on a dark world and Your Son was born in Bethlehem. We praise You that He came and that He shall come again. We confess that the doors of our hearts are too low to receive the King of Glory. We are too indifferent to go meet Him. Come, we pray, and by Your Holy Spirit banish from us all that resists His entrance into our hearts. Make us, O God, a people who watch and pray for the day of His appearing. Even so, come, Lord Jesus; come quickly! **Amen.**

(Epiphany) O God of the guiding star which brought the Gentile kings to worship the Christ-child: strengthen and encourage us who follow the star, and lead us into all dark places of the earth, and let the light of Christ shine through us. May that day come when all men shall pay due homage to the King of kings, even Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

(Palm Sunday) O Lord Jesus Christ, as on this day we recall Your triumphal entry into Jerusalem, enter our hearts, we pray, and subdue them wholly unto Your will. O King of grace and glory, come into our lives with all Your strength, gentleness, and goodness. We acknowledge You as Savior and redeemer, give You our joyous homage, and pledge never-dying loyalty. **Amen.**

(Lent) O God, by the example of Your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ, You have taught us the greatness of true humility, and now has called us to watch with Him in His suffering. Help us to take the towel and basin and in humbleness of spirit to wash the feet of those who most need our ministry. Give us the graciousness to serve one another in all lowliness and thus fulfill the law of love on the Name of Your Servant, even Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

(Passion) Almighty God, You have revealed to us in the life and teaching of Your Son the true way to a good life may lead to the cross, and the reward of faithfulness and obedience to Your will may be a crown of thorns. Give us the grace to learn these hard lessons. May we take up our cross and follow Christ in strength of patience and constancy of faith; may we have such fellowship with Him in His sorrow that we may know the secret of His strength and peace, and see, in our darkest hour, the shining of Eternal Light. **Amen.**

(Easter) Almighty God, Source of all life, by whose power our Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead; we praise You, we give You thanks for this great victory over sin and death. The resurrection of Your Son, our Savior, has opened to us the door of abundant and everlasting life. Our despair is changed to triumph, our fears to hope. We are grateful. Accept our thanks, O Lord, and may we prove our gratitude by selfless service in behalf of all those who need our love and care. May we show them the Risen Christ in all we do. In His living Name we pray.

Amen.

¹ from: *“Book of Worship For United States Forces”, 1974*

LABOR DAY

On this Labor Day try something different - pray for rights and justice for all who work and the dignity and the success of all who are seeking work. Amen

Creating God, You made the heavens and the earth and your work was good and we praise you. May we continue your good work through our own labor - helping to create your kingdom on earth as in heaven. We pray on this Labor Day for all those who work. Whether in the school, the factory, the mines, the armed services, the business office, government or on the farm may all workers carry themselves with honor, know the respect of their managers, be kept safe from harm, and be well paid for hard work so that they might provide for their family and loved ones. God help us not to pit workers of one nation against those of another nation so that one must suffer if another thrives. Rather help us to create work in concert so that workers of all nations might mutually prosper with decent wages for decent work. Today we also pray for those who are unemployed or underemployed. May they not become discouraged; may they continue to find ways to learn and grow in their time out of work. Help us as a nation to continue to provide for those who are suffering from unemployment so that they do not lose hearth and home. May those out of work experience tangible evidence of our support and may meaningful work come quickly. Amen

May all the labors of our lives benefit your creation so that we might be co-creators of your world filled with peace and enough for all. Amen

BENEDICTIONS & CLOSING PRAYERS

O God of people and nations, we pause at the close of this meeting to acknowledge again Your sovereignty over our lives and our Country. We remember before You our comrades now departed this life. We honor them for their loyalty to God and Country, for their good deeds, and for their friendship. May they rest in peace and may the good works You have begun in them be brought to perfection, that our Nation may be strong and our people secure and happy. Give to us safe journey to our homes. **Amen.**

Almighty God, receive us in this evening hour as we offer ourselves over to You in body, soul and spirit for the blessings of this day. We thank You for those who have led us so well in this dinner/banquet. As we invoke Your blessing upon us, give us a still and quiet heart and mind. We thank You, O God, for this food which reminds us of Your care over us and pray that it will

strengthen us for the doing of Your good pleasure and give us power to render better service to You and our fellow veterans. **Amen.**

Our Heavenly Father, we ask for Your benediction to rest on us this day. As You have graciously preserved our nation through the years and have led us in wondrous ways, grant that we may be worthy of our high calling a Nation. Make us reverent in the use of freedom, just in the exercise of power, and generous in the protection of weakness. Inspire the men and women who direct our nation, that they may guide it wisely and well. Especially do we pray for our Commander-in-Chief (Commander), as he moves forward with the program for the Veterans of Foreign Wars this year. Grant him and us that in all our duties, Your help; in all perplexities, Your counsel; in all danger, Your protection; and in all sorrow, and Your peace. **Amen.**

Let us go forth into the world in peace and dedicated to Your service, O Lord. Let us hold fast to that which is good, render to no person evil for evil, strengthen the faint-hearted, support the weak, help the needy and the afflicted, and honor all people. Let us love and serve the Lord, rejoicing in the power of His Spirit. And may God's blessing be upon us and remain with us always. **Amen.**

God grant to the living, grace; to the departed, rest; to the Nation, peace and concord; to us all Your servants the promise of everlasting life, light to guide us on our way, courage to support us, and Your blessing to unite us in service to You our God and this our Country. **Amen.**

Almighty Father, help us to remember that freedom does not automatically perpetuate itself, that we have to work at it, nurture it, protect it, and pray for it. Freedom, like faith, needs our attention and our cooperation. Lord, be with us now to strengthen us; about us, to keep us; above us, to protect us; beneath us, to uphold us; before us, to direct us; behind us, to keep us from straying; and 'round about us, to defend us. Blessed are You, O Father, forever and ever. **Amen.**

Almighty and Merciful God, we remember before You in this moment our departed comrades. We recall with reverence the good needs they accomplished. We honor these who fought a good fight in a just cause—comrades both in war and in peace who have served this Country with dignity and with honor. May they rest in peace. (*a moment of silence*) May we consecrate our hearts and lives to You our God and to this our Country; and to the ideals and principles and hopes of those whom we honor, who have served faithfully and are now at rest. **Amen.**

Our Heavenly Father, with heads uncovered and bowed in tribute to our fallen comrades, we bring this meeting to a close. Before we part our separate ways, we pause to think of our members who are experiencing difficult times. For them and their families, we pray for strength and courage. In the silence of this moment, we dedicate ourselves anew to our God and our Country. **Amen.**

Glory be to You our Lord and our God as we behold the blessings You have given us as citizens of the United States of America. We thank You Lord, for this blessed and bountiful Land. Help

us to renew our loyalty to this great Country and enable us to rededicate ourselves in faith to Thy service. We pray Lord, in Your Holy Name. **Amen.**

May the Lord our God bless us all present here, to memorialize those who lived and died to preserve liberty and freedom in our nation and in the world. And may the Lord our God remember all those whose sacrifice gave this nation its greatness, progress, and riches. May our memory and all of those who served in the armed forces, be an honorable one, full of thanksgiving to the Lord; and remember with much love and mercy those who died in the service of our Country, whether on the air, or on the land or in the sea. Be with us all and provide us with traveling mercy as we return to our homes. **Amen.**

Let us depart in peace, and in love and charity with our neighbors. May we be joined together in the common goal of service to our God and our Country. Let us drive safely and carefully to our homes, and may God's blessing be with us all. **Amen.**

May the strength of God sustain us; may the power of God preserve us; may the hands of God protect us; may the way of God direct us; may the love of God go with us this day (night) and forever. **Amen.**

The Lord bless us and keep us.

The Lord make His face to shine upon us, and be gracious unto us.

The Lord lift up His countenance upon us,

and give us peace, this day (night) and forever more. **Amen.**

BANQUET "GRACE" PRAYERS

We are grateful, Lord, for those here who inspire us;

For those with courage enough to lead us;

For those with wisdom enough to challenge us;

But, above all, for those with backbone enough to be themselves with us.

Bless, O Lord, our food and drink which we are about to receive from Your bounty.

Bless this gathering, granting us health, peace and progress:

For You are good and to You we ascribe all glory now and forever. **Amen.**

Blessed are You, O Lord, King of the Universe: You bring forth food from the earth, and sustain all Your creation with goodness, mercy, and grace. We cherish the memories of the past and with fondness and gratitude we gather with our friends and associates You have blessed us with. We are grateful for all who share our heritage and our patriotism. Bless them and nourish us all with Thy Spirit of love and obedience. Bless the food we will partake to our physical body that our spirits will be lifted in praise to You for these and all Your blessings. **Amen.**

Eternal Father, for the continued blessings of heaven, we give You thanks. As You feed our bodies, so may our minds partake of that which is wholesome and pure. With this physical and mental nourishment, grant that we may also live in a way that brings honor to our families, our

nation, our comrades and sisters, our God, and ourselves. May we do Your will at all times in order to be truly called Your children. Bless, now, this food prepared for us, that it may nourish and strengthen us for our duties and responsibilities. **Amen.**

Be present at our table, Lord;
Be here and everywhere adored.
These creatures bless, and grant that we
May feast in Paradise with Thee. **Amen. (John Wesley)**

Bless, O Lord, this food to our use, and us to Your service;
And keep us ever mindful of the needs of others. **Amen. (Protestant)**

Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts which we are about to receive from Thy bounty, through
Christ our Lord **Amen. (Catholic)**

Our Father, how great You are! You have blessed us in so many ways and we thank You—for the opportunity to unite in this moment of prayer, this special privilege we have in America. We ask Your blessing on this food. May our fellowship, as we partake be an added blessing as we strive to keep America—“*one nation under God.*” **Amen.**

We cherish the memories of the past, our Father, with fondness and gratitude we recall our friends and associates with which You have blessed us. The joys of similar occasions as we now participate in, causes us to anticipate Your goodness to us again. Bless this food to our physical body that our Spirits will be lifted in praise to You for these and all Your blessings. **Amen.**

Dear Lord, may this meal that we share be seasoned from above with Your blessings and Your grace—but most of all Your love. **Amen.**

Heavenly Father: we thank You for Your presence with us. We thank You for bringing us together. We thank You for our health, our homes and our work. We thank You for the joyful moments we share as a Veterans of Foreign Wars family. We thank You for our bounty and the many blessings You give us. We thank You for the many little things that bring us joy. We thank You for Your goodness to us. We thank You for the gift of food we are about to eat. We thank You for those who labored to prepare it. And we thank You for sharing life with us, both in this meal and in all ways You sustain us. **Amen.**

Our Heavenly Father, we come unto You in this moment because we believe that You are our God and we are Your people, and You are the Creator and Sustainer of life. We acknowledge that every good and perfect gift comes from above and that all that we have comes from Your Divine beneficent hand. We thank You for this food and ask for Your blessings upon us as we partake. Teach us to be always mindful of Your loving and tender mercies. **Amen.**

Thank You, O Lord, for guiding us towards achieving our goals. Thank You for giving us the opportunity to gather at this banquet/meal and to appreciate life. Thank You for our heavenly and earthly gifts which You have bestowed upon us. Thank You for Your love and compassion for human-kind. You are a great and wonderful God, and to You we ascribe all honor and glory, now and forever. **Amen.**

For the joy of life we are grateful to You, O God; for the fun we have as we jest one with another, we thank You. We pray for the food we are about to receive that it will be used for strength to serve You. The bread looks good and so does the meat. So bless us real good, O Lord, as we eat. **Amen.**

Grant that our fellowship here will draw us closer to You, which leads us closer to one another, to the end that we will use the strength gained from the food we partake to the work You have given us to do. Let us serve You not with the Spirit of bondage as slaves, but with cheerfulness and gladness of children, delighting ourselves in You and rejoicing in Your work, that freedom and peace may abound. **Amen.**

O Gracious Heavenly Father, we pause and bow our heads before You to humbly ask Your blessing and to give thanks for the goodness You have shown us. To assist us to overcome our human weaknesses and needs, You have urged us to feed the hungry and give drink to the thirsty, and to aid the poor and needy. May Your blessings be graciously bestowed upon (Post ___) and upon those who have accepted, in such a special way, the fulfilling of Your admonitions. Remember especially in Your love, the Auxiliary who give so much of their time and talent to this organization. And now, O Lord, bless us and these, Your gifts of food and drink of which we are about to partake, for You are blessed and glorified, now and forever. **Amen.**

Lord, for all the good things You have bestowed on us, we give thanks—for our homes, our families, and these our friends gathered here. We give thanks too for the good we are about to receive from Your bounty and ask Your blessings on it and the hands that have prepared it. And dear Lord, we ask Your forgiveness for anything You have found amiss in us today whether it be in a thought, word, or deed, and have us tonight (today) in Your holy keeping as we continue to serve You, our Country, and our Veterans. **Amen.**

Almighty God whose great commandment is that we shall love our neighbors as ourselves, and who has taught us that we should do to others as we would have them do to us, we ask Your blessings upon those gathered here today (tonight). We ask that You will hold before us the vision of Your will for us all which will enlighten our goals and our actions undertaken in Your name and for our State and Nation. Grant us a vision of this state, fair as it might be in the fulfillment of Your purposes; a state of justice where none shall prey upon others; a state of economic plenty where greed and poverty shall both be done away; a state of generosity where the needs of the unfortunate are met with care; a state of brotherhood where success is founded upon service, and where honor is given to nobleness alone; a state of peace, where order shall not rest on force but on love for each and everyone. Bless this occasion, and bless the bounty which

we are about to receive—as You have promised to be always with Your people when they turn to You our God and Father. **Amen.**

Almighty God our heavenly Father, as we pause now in a moment of prayer, we recognize You are the source of all life. We thank You for fond memories, old friends, and new friendships. We have traveled various roads to get to this time in our lives and this place. May we always have You as our traveling companion as we journey. Bless, O Lord, our food and drink which we are about to receive from Your bounty. May it nourish our body as Your Spirit nourishes our soul. We pray in Your Holy Name. **Amen.**

Almighty God, be with us as we come together this day to pay tribute to our _____ . We rejoice that we are a source of support to our Country. Help us with Your guidance in the work of our great organization. May our activities be counted among the good deeds that please You. We ask for Your strength and the ability to do the tasks You set before us. Keep us concerned about the welfare and improvement of our nation, the safety and pride of our homes, and the moral and spiritual values that guide our community living. We ask Your blessings upon our members and guests here gathered and to bless the food which we are about to partake together. All this we ask in Your Holy Name. **Amen.**

We thank You, O Lord our God, for Your heavenly and earthly gifts which we have received from Your bounty. Thank You for giving us Your blessings in this assembly and for providing us with leadership to minister to our well-being. Bless them with a continuing desire to grow in wisdom and understanding of their world, their fellow comrades and sisters, and themselves. We pray in Your Holy Name. **Amen.**

LOYALTY DAY PRAYER

Prayer for our Nation

I lift up this prayer to the God of gods, the Lord of lords, the King of kings and the sovereign ruler of all nations. We are here together on this Loyalty Day morning to affirm our loyalty to the United States of America. As good citizens we affirm that we hold our citizenship as a sacred trust between one another and with you; for you alone are the giver of life and liberty; and no pursuit of happiness will ever find success apart from an abiding faith and trust in your mercy, grace and love.

For your glory I ask that those who lead us in the courts of government might be blessed with wisdom, humility and courage to do on our behalf what is right in your eyes. You alone are the judge of history and you alone know what is good and true and right. Forgive us as individual citizens and as a nation for our frequent failure to do justice, to love mercy and to walk humbly at your side.” By the power of your Holy Spirit we ask that you would work in and through us “to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity.”

Above all, we want to thank and praise you for the gifts of liberty and life that our nation was founded to protect, preserve and defend. And even as we reaffirm our loyalty to our nation we also pledge our lives and our sacred honor as tokens of our loyalty to you and your kingdom.

We yearn for that day yet to come when we will declare that “the kingdoms of this world have become your kingdom, and you shall reign forever and ever.” Amen.

MEMORIAL DAY PRAYERS

Almighty God our Heavenly Father, in Your hands are the living and the dead; we give You thanks for all those, our comrades and sisters, who have laid down their lives in the service of our Country. May they rest in peace, and may perpetual light shine upon them. May the good work of seeking justice for the oppressed and peace for all mankind be rewarded with success, that their sacrifices shall not have been in vain. And may we never fail to remember the awesome cost of the freedom which we enjoy. **Amen.**

(Concluding prayer) Almighty God, our gratitude for Your generosity grows with each passing day. We acknowledge this day’s special blessings. We have honored those who now enjoy Your eternal embrace. We ask Your blessings on all that are present here.. Especially do we seek Your consolation for those recently bereaved. May Your grace be with them and with us now and forever. And, if it by Your will, may we all be favored to gather again in these circumstances and in this company before another year has passed. **Amen**

O Lord Almighty, remember those who lived and died fighting to protect the dignity and the freedom of mankind. Let our spirits be proud of them. Let our hearts be compassionate, and our minds clear and determined in giving them honor and respect. And let us be dependent on the loving kindness of the Lord our God. As we remember the departed, let us be true soldiers in war and on peace. Let us be courageous protectors and true guardians of freedom. Let us be the true masters of brotherly love. O Lord, guide us in the way of moral responsibility; enlighten us—who are true believers in ethics and justice. Let this day be a day of commemoration and honor to those who sacrificed their lives in order to give us liberty and our Nation security. Remember them, O Lord, in Your mercy, and have compassion on us. Make us a generation of wisdom, discipline, and faith we pray in Your Holy Name. **Amen.**

Eternal and ever-loving God, we thank You for the privilege of meeting on this hallowed day in this free nation to honor our noble dead and to re-dedicate our lives to You and our Country. We thank You that we are permitted to live through days of challenge, for the hours of the testing of our loyalty to our national heritage, and for our devotion to the high ideals for which others have lived and died. Bless, O God, the thousands of disabled veterans in our hospitals today and also the homeless veterans in our land. Relieve pain, ease their suffering, and give them cheer and hope. Help us to respond gladly and generously to their needs of body and spirit. We pay for our men who may still be in prisons in a strange and foreign land. Give to them courage in the face of hopelessness and comfort in the midst of loneliness. On this day of sacred memory, we ask for grace and power to live truer lives, to be better servants of the living God, finer fathers and mothers, nobler sons and daughters, and more loyal citizens of this great Country and of Your world. Lord, grant that we may yet see the day when war and fear of war shall no longer be; the day when peace shall become our common possession; the day when Your will shall be done on earth as it is in Heaven. O Lord, hear our prayer for our sakes. **Amen.**

O Lord God of Hosts, as we gather to honor and pay respects to our comrades and sisters who have departed this life, it is fitting that we remember first our great Nation. You have given us a rich and beautiful land for our heritage. We humbly pray that we may always prove ourselves a

people constantly aware of Your favor, and therefore anxious to demonstrate our gratitude in seeking to know and to do Your will. May our land be blessed with honest and productive industry, and a people of integrity who are anxious to learn and willing to respect one another. All this we ask of You, Almighty God, in Your Holy Name. **Amen.**

Gracious God, grant that we may appreciate and treasure the freedom that is our gift and our heritage, and that we may never forget the great price at which it was purchased for us all. We remember this day before You all who serve in the Armed Forces of our nation. Protect and defend them in the day of battle, and in the time of peace. Grant that they may serve with honor and dignity both to Your great glory and to the credit of this Nation.

We ask also that You will watch over the veterans of this land, inspiring them to serve You and this Country in ever new and creative ways. Comfort our ill and wounded comrades who languish in hospitals or homes. Lighten their burdens, relieve their suffering and pain, and restore to them the blessings of health again. We also pray for those who have given their lives in the service of our Country (*moment of silence*), and for those, our fellow veterans who have served this Nation both in time of battle and in time of peace. May light perpetual shine upon them. May the good work which You have begun in them be brought to perfection, that this land may prosper and that there may be lasting peace throughout our world. All this we ask You, Almighty Father, in Your Holy Name. **Amen.**

PRAYERS FOR DECEASED COMRADES

Heavenly Father, we are gathered here to commemorate those among Your servants who have been called to Your bosom in the Land of Light. We pray that Your mercy and justice have made right their human failings and faults. We pray that whatever justice was denied them in this vale of tears has been granted them a hundredfold. We pray that whatever comforts they were denied in this life, whatever evil they endured, may now rebound to their everlasting happiness.

We are thankful for their companionship and association in this life. By their efforts we are assured security and strength. Because they served well, we are proud to call them our own. We ask that, following in their footsteps, we may continue in Your service until Your summons comes. Then, in the knowledge that we have striven to observe Your councils and precepts, may be judged worthy to be united with them and with You forever in Heaven. **Amen.**

O God of mercy, peace, and love, we remember before You in this moment our comrade (sister) and friend (*name*). We recall with gratitude and respect all that he (*she*) stood for in this life. Help us to live in the companionship of his (*her*) spirit. May we be kind to the friends and family he (*she*) loved; devoted to the community in which he (*she*) lived; and loyal to the causes which he (*she*) served. Thus, in our life, may he (*she*) live on, to our great comfort, to the betterment of Your creation, and to the furthering of Your most Holy Will. **Amen.**

O Lord our God, we ask that You will comfort all who are bereaved with a spirit of faith and courage. May they remember, giving thanks, for the love and joy they shared in an earthly relationship. May they be comforted with the sure knowledge of a joyful reunion with those they love in Your Everlasting Kingdom. **Amen.**

O Lord Jesus Christ, You have shown us that death is but the gateway to a more glorious life, and that we must not fear its coming; and we know, also, that neither life nor death can separate

us from Your love. Assure us yet again that our comrade/sister (*name*) departed is not lost to us, but sharing new life with You in the Kingdom of our Father, where we shall in Your good time be reunited. We know him/ her to be with You forever. **Amen.**

Strengthen and comfort, O Lord, all who mourn for the loss of loves ones now departed this life. Some have died in the service of our Country; and some, having served this Nation both in war and in peace, are now at rest. Be with those who mourn in their sorrow. Support them in their loneliness. Grant that they may know that nothing in life not even death can separate them from Your love declared so eloquently in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

Eternal Father, we call upon You for all who mourn the loss of those near and dear to them. Be to those in sorrow a strong support in their loneliness and a comforter in their time of grief. Be ever near them, draw them into closer fellowship with You, and grant them sure trust and confidence in Your Fatherly care. **Amen.**

O Lord our comfort and help in time of need, You have taught us that nothing can separate us from Your love, and that all souls are Yours. Grant that we may come to know this increasingly as we draw nearer to You in faith and love. Grant also that we may be uplifted from our sorrow, so that we may more faithfully serve You our God and more effectively honor the memory of our comrade (*sister*) departed. **Amen.**

Father of us all! In the depth of our silent reverence we realize the truth of the inspired words, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." As comrade after comrade departs, we march on with our ranks grown thinner. Help us to be faithful unto You, and to one another. Look in mercy on the widows and children of our departed comrades, we beseech You, and with Your own tenderness, console and comfort those who are bereaved. Heavenly Father, bless our Country with freedom, peace, and righteousness. Through Your favor may we meet at last before Your throne in Heaven. We praise Your Great Name forever and ever. **Amen.**

VETERANS' DAY PRAYERS

Let us remember before our God today, those who sacrificed during times of war in order that we might have liberty and freedom and security.

- Veterans both living and dead who fought on land, in the air, and on the water;
- The men and women in labor and industry who provided the machinery and weapons of war.

Eternal God, who alone rules the destinies of nations, and who has deemed that men and women should live together in peace. We pray for those who fought a good fight and finished the course. On this day we call to remembrance those who served in far off places and have laid down their arms to march into that land of eternal peace. We also call to remembrance all veterans who served in the Armed Forces of our Nation and contributed to the greatness of our national defense. We are indeed grateful for their service and sacrifice. And, if it were not for the men

and women in our factories, their victories would not have been sustained. Keep sacred all their sacrifices in our hearts. Keep holy our course in Your sight. Enkindle within us a flame of selfless, unwavering devotion to duty that we may never be found wanting in those qualities of spirit and mind which alone are able to preserve our homes, the peace of our nation, and the tranquility of the world. In Your Holy Name we pray. **Amen.**

(Benediction) Our Heavenly Father, we ask for Your benediction to rest on us this day. As You have graciously preserved our Nation through the years, and have led us in wondrous ways, grant that we may be worthy of our high calling as a Nation. **Amen.**

Gracious God, thank You for disclosing Yourself to humanity through the ages and even now through Your love shared by Your children everywhere.

Today, Lord, we remember and honor the memory of those who sacrificed their lives in war that we might live in peace. Let our acts become living memorials to their service. In a special way call to our remembrance the many who die today in wars of liberation. We know that all is not well in the world and that it needs to be better. May we find a way of being concerned enough to understand and begin to help.

Be with our President and all the men and women who make national policy, that they may be guided by the spirit of peace. Strengthen our efforts as a leader of nations to work with other nations in deeds which will enhance the common good. Forgive us as individuals who fail in our own citizenship and increase our resolve to make tomorrow meaningful to today's children.

May we find that rededicating our lives to our Country, to the world which we are citizens and to our God, we will be strengthened and uplifted by Your Spirit. In Your Holy Name we pray.

Amen.

O Lord Almighty, remember those who died fighting to protect the dignity and the freedom of mankind. Let our hearts be compassionate and our minds clear and determined in giving them honor and respect. And let us be dependent on the loving kindness of the Lord our God. As we remember the departed, let us be courageous protectors and true guardians of freedom. Let us be the true masters of brotherly love. O Lord, guide us in the way of moral responsibility; enlighten us and make us true believers in morality and justice. Let this day be a day of commemoration and honor to all those who sacrificed in order to give us liberty, and our nation security.

Remember them, O Lord, in Your mercy, and have compassion on us. Make us a generation of wisdom, discipline, and good faith. **Amen.**

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, we ask that Your blessing be bestowed on our friends and loved ones. We thank You for this opportunity to share with them this special occasion to honor our veterans. Let us always honor the memory of those brave men and women who sacrificed so that we may experience freedom in a country that is free. Heavenly father, keep their families in Your kind care. Bless them and comfort them in their time of sorrow. Let us be reminded of Life, Liberty, Justice, Freedom, and Democracy, that we may be ever grateful to You for those veterans who gave so much for their Country. We ask Your blessing upon this program and when we depart, grant us Your continued fellowship that makes abiding peace. We ask this in Your Holy Name. **Amen.**

O God Eternal, before whom each generation rise and fall and pass away, we bow before You in gratitude as we remember our heritage in this, our land. We thank You for men and women whose blood is the measure of our debt in times of war, and for men and women of peace whose lives of service keep the fabric of our nation together. Save us from assuming that homage is a substitute for service. Teach us to be afraid of none but You, to speak unafraid the words of justice. Inspire us by the example of those who loved this land which we love, and who labored for a friendly world, free from hatred and bitterness. In our foreign policy and in our relationships within the Nation, help us to further only those purposes that will promote unity and justice and further the coming of Your kingdom on earth. Especially help us overcome the hatred, the cruelty, and the rejection of others who may be different than we are. We pray in Your Holy Name. **Amen.**

Almighty God, Father of us all! We, Your servants, turn to You for continuance of Your blessings upon us. You who have spared we veterans from the grasp of our enemies, grant us the full understandings of Your precious comfort. We thank You for the privileges of life and the blessings we enjoy through Your graciousness to our Nation, the land in which we are given the freedom of speech, religion and the pursuit of happiness. Assist us to know You better and that You are the God of the universe and our ideal. In Your mercy, may we the living find our peace. Grant us from above, this day, the challenge of high endeavor, the beauty of a humble spirit, the strong courage and will, without exertion, to continue to glorify You; praise You and love You to the end of time. **Amen.**

Almighty God, we stand here today to pay tribute to brave men and women, living and dead, who have served their country in the Armed Forces. Accept our thanksgiving for their sacrifices and the sacrifices of their families, which have purchased for us a free land. Cause us never to take for granted their devotion to liberty. Let our spirits be proud of them, let their hearts be compassionate, and our minds clear and determined in giving them the honor and respect they deserve. Rekindle within us a flame of selfless, unwavering devotion to duty, that we may never be found wanting in those qualities of spirit and mind which are able to preserve our homes, our communities, and the peace of our Nation. Keep our memories alive with GRATITUDE and our gratitude alive with our FAITHFULNESS to the principles which made our Nation great. Grant, we pray, joy and fulfillment to those still living; and for those who are at rest, grant Your peace. **Amen.**

OTHER PRAYERS

(For Children) Dear Lord and Father of us all, we give You thanks for the children You have placed in our care. Give us grace and wisdom to train them in Your faith and love. May they give You due reverence and all the joyous loyalty of their young hearts, so that as they advance in years they may also grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus, who loved all children and blessed them; this we ask in His Name. **Amen.**

(For Youth) O Lord God, source of all strength, fountainhead of all wisdom: look in mercy upon our beloved young people; replenish them with Your truth. Teach them to follow the truth. Adorn them with purity of life; keep them strong in body, keen of mind and sound of soul. Guide them through the shadowy valleys of life. Make them conscious of Your presence with them as they gain the heights of glory in the glad sunshine of some victory. Comfort them when

they are discouraged. May Your peace, which passes all understanding, abide upon them all the days of their life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

(For Family & Home) O God, the Father and defender of Your people, whom neither space nor time can separate from such as continue in Your keeping; be present, we beseech You, with those who are parted from us; prosper them and do them good; guide and direct them in all their undertakings; may nothing hurtful beset them and no evil befall them; and grant that, upheld by Your right hand, they may arrive in safety at their journey's end; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

(For Authorities) Lord God of Hosts, You have made known Your authority and delivered Your orders for the day in Your Holy Law; You have given persons authority to exercise leadership over us and have bidden us to obey them and pray for them: we beseech You, fill our officers with zeal for the tasks delegated to them and with understanding and concern for those who, serving under them, must carry out those tasks. May they serve You with pure, exemplary lives and thereby give those whom they lead an ideal to follow. Give them wisdom to judge justly and with compassion in dealings with their subordinates, so that we may be ready to follow their leadership with a willing spirit; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

(Police Officer's Prayer) Almighty God, Whose Great Power and Eternal Wisdom embraces the universe, watch over all Policemen and Law Enforcement Officers. Protect them from harm in the performance of their duty to stop crime and violence. We Pray, help them keep our streets and homes safe day and night. We Recommend Them To Your loving care because their duty is dangerous in the cause of freedom and justice. Grant them Your unending strength and courage in their daily assignments. Dear God, protect these brave men & women. unite them safely with their families after their duty has ended. **Amen.**

(Prayer for Youth) We invoke Your blessing, O God, on these young American Cadets. Give joy to their hearts, understanding to their minds courage and resoluteness to their wills that they may be strong in the fight against evil, and pursue that which is right and just. Instill into our youth a love for You and Country, a spirit of unselfish service and a senses of loyalty, self-reliance and responsibility. Guide us and direct our efforts as we labor to train our youth for tomorrow's responsibilities and leadership. We ask and prayer in Your Holy Name. **Amen**

(Invocation Prayer for Law Enforcement Officers) We invoke Your blessing, O God, on these young American Cadets. Give joy to their hearts, understanding to their minds courage and resoluteness to their wills that they may be strong in the fight against evil, and pursue that which is right and just. Instill into these youth a love for You and Country, a spirit of unselfish service and a senses of loyalty, self-reliance and responsibility. And now, O God, watch over all Policemen and Law enforcement Officers. Protect them from harm in the performance of their duty to stop crime and violence. We Pray, help them keep our streets and homes safe day and night. We recommend them to Your loving care because their duty is dangerous in the cause of freedom and justice. **Amen.**

(Benediction Prayer for Youth & Law Enforcement Officers) Guide us and direct our efforts as we labor to train our youth for tomorrow's responsibilities and leadership. Grant Your unending strength and courage in the daily assignments of our law enforcement officers and protect these brave men & women. Unite them safely with their families after their duty has ended. We ask and prayer in Your Holy Name. **Amen.**

FOR THE SICK, WOUNDED AND DYING

(Catholic) O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You. I detest all my sins because of Your just punishments, but most of all because they offend You, my God, who are all and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Your grace, to sin no more and to avoid the occasions of sin. **Amen.**

(Protestant) Almighty and most Merciful God and Savior, extend to Your servant comfort of Your gracious care. Help *him/her* to see this sickness as a time for strengthening both *his/her* spiritual and physical well-being. If it be Your will to restore *him/her* to health, assist *him/her* by Your Holy Spirit to lead the rest of *his/her* life in godly respect and for Your glory. If Your fatherly wisdom wills that *his/her* share in this present life be ended, give *him/her* grace to accept in faith the salvation won for *him/her* by Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

(Jewish) O Lord, my God and God of my fathers, my destiny is in Your hands. If it be Your will, grant me speedy healing of my wounds (illness). But if not, then grant me complete trust in Your wisdom and love, that I may accept whatever may be in store for me. Give me the power to understand that only with You is perfect knowledge and only through You can one find boundless happiness and eternal peace. Most sincerely and humbly I acknowledge my faith and trust in you: Sh'mah Yis-ro-al, Ah-doh-noi e-loh-hay-noo Ah-doh-noh-noi e-chod. Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is One!

(Orthodox) O Master and Almighty Lord, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, You have told us You desire all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth, and that You desire not the death of sinner but that *he/she* turn and live. We therefore implore You to absolve Your servant from all sins from *his/her* youth until now. You alone can loose the bonds and restore the contrite. You alone are the hope of the despairing and can remit the sins of everyone who trusts in You. Receive now in peace the soul of Your servant and give it rest in that place where all Your saints dwell; through the grace of Your only-begotten Son, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, with whom You are blest, and Your all-holy and life-creating Spirit; now and forever and unto ages of ages. **Amen.**

Lord, You are Creator of all that us. We come into Your presence this day with thankful hearts. We give thanks to You for the bounty of Your blessings, for the sharing between peoples, for the love of families, friends, comrades and sisters. O God, we ask Your strength and guidance throughout this day, that we may do our best to serve You and represent our respective Posts. Grant that Your blessings upon this (convention/meeting), each participant, and the work they represent. **Amen.**

PRAYER FOR OUR TROOPS

Heavenly Father, I pray that you continue to protect our troops that are in harm's way. Bless the leadership of the military and give them the wisdom that surpasses all understanding to make clear cut, decisive decisions to defeat the enemy completely. I pray for our military chaplains. Give them strength in the Holy Spirit so that they will be able to give spiritual guidance to those troops that have experienced the horrors of war. Keep all safe from harm and bring them safely home to the loving arms of their families.

MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES

Eternal Lord God, who alone governs the heavens and rules the raging seas, mercifully take under Your Almighty and most precious protection our Country's armed forces members. Preserve them from danger upon the sea, on the land, and in the air, and from the violence of the enemy, that they may be a safeguard for our Country and a security for its people; that we may in peace and quietness serve You, our God, to the glory of Your name. **Amen.**

O God Almighty, the Creator and Ruler of the Universe, we ask that You will strengthen and protect the members of the armed forces of the United States of America. In the day of battle, may they be courageous and strong, resourceful and capable, resolute and victorious. In the time of peace, may they serve with dignity and honor, as effective emissaries of good will for this Nation. May their devotion and loyalty to You and to their homeland inspire them in moments of challenge, and comfort them in tribulation and long separation from loves ones. And finally, we ask that they may return safely to serve You and our Country in the days and years to come. **Amen.**

FOR ALL IN THE SERVICE OF OUR COUNTRY

O Almighty Lord God, who neither slumbers nor sleeps; Protect and assist, we beseech thee, all those who at home or abroad, by land, by sea, or in the air, are serving this country, that they, being armed with thy defense, may be preserved evermore in all perils; and being filled with wisdom and girded with strength, may do their duty to thy honor and glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

A COAST GUARD PRAYER

Almighty and Everlasting God, Whose hand stills the tumult of the deep, we offer our prayers for those who serve in our Coast Guard. We are mindful of their traditions of selfless service to the seafarers who make their ways to appointed ports. Employ their devotions of good ends as they track the weather and search for the seas for those in extremity of storm, shipwreck or battle. Make their soundings and markings sure that safe passages may be found by those who go down to the sea in ships. Encourage them, O Lord, as they stand guard over our coasts and the bulwarks of our freedoms. Graciously deliver them from threatening calamities in all their perilous voyages. Bless the keepers of the lights and be Thou their close friend in lonely watches. Keep the beacons of honor and duty burning that they may reach the home port with duty well performed, in service to Thee and our land. **AMEN.**

Medal of Honor

Almighty God, we are here today to pay tribute to men of our Nation who are been bestowed the highest award our Nation can offer to her fighting men and women. They have answered the call of courage and bravery by offering themselves in self-sacrifice and beyond the call of duty. Accept our thanksgiving for their sacrifices and acts of bravery and courage. Let our spirits be proud of them. May Your Holy presence be with us now. We pray in Your Holy Name. **Amen.**

Pearl Harbor Day

Heavenly Father, we are gathered here to commemorate those who gave their lives at Pearl Harbor on December 7th, 1941. Let us always honor the memory of the brave men who sacrificed so that we may experience freedom in a Country that is free. Let us be reminded of life, liberty, justice, freedom and democracy that we may be ever grateful to You and those veterans who gave so much for their Country. We ask Your blessing upon us this day and grant unto us Your continued fellowship that makes abiding peace. **Amen.**

Korean War Remembered

() years ago the Korean War ended. Hundreds of thousands of young men and women served their country in that War and thousands gave their lives.) Let us pray.

O Lord, we thank You for the sacrifices our Korean Veterans made for us and for peace. We gather here in these moments to remember them. We pray that You would bless and protect all Your people. Guide us on the path to unity and harmony that we may serve You and Your people in keeping with Your Holy Will. May this day be a day of commemoration and honor to those who sacrificed in order to give South Koreans liberty and assure greater freedom in our world. **Amen.**

Vietnam War Remembered

Almighty God, we are here today to pay tribute to brave men and women, living and dead, who have gone to a distant land called Vietnam. Accept our thanksgiving for their sacrifices and the sacrifices of their families. Cause us to never to take for granted their devotion to liberty. Grant, we pray, joy and fulfillment to those still living; and for those who are at rest, remember them, O Lord, in Your mercy, and have compassion on us. Make us a generation of wisdom, discipline, and good faith. **Amen.**

Prayer for Prisoners Of War

O Lord God, some of our comrades and companions are prisoners of war. Comfort them, we pray, in their isolation from their homes and loved ones; supply their needs and protect them from want and deprivation; strengthen and sustain them day after day that they may face discouragement with courage and hardship with resolution. Grant they may find patience to endure and peace in the knowledge of Your continuing presence. **Amen.**

Independence Day

As our Nation unites again to celebrate the gift of liberty, we give thanks for all those patriots and defenders of our Nation's ideals who have sacrificed so much for the sake of others. Give to us a renewed dedication to the preservation of the finest principles of freedom and justice which have shaped our Nation's destiny, and help us to call to mind the part that Your revealed truth has had in bringing this all about. To You we give all honor and praise. **Amen.**

Prayer for The President

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, be with the President of these United States to guide him/her with Your wisdom, to assist him/her in the discharge of his/her duties, that under his/her leadership we may preserve our Nation's integrity, guard her against all enemies, and keep her a bulwark of freedom and justice and a beacon of love and hope to light the way to a world of peace. **Amen.**

Training School/Conference

Almighty God, we thank You for our being together in this training experience. Inspire us to put into practice what we learn so that our Districts and Posts may be bastions of loyalty, honor and service to our community, State and Nation. In Your Holy Name we pray. **Amen.**

Gracious God, we are thankful for this opportunity to gather as comrades once more. We ask for Your guidance for the leadership of our District/Department. We ask for open minds and receptive hearts as we begin our training event. May it be profitable for us, our Posts and our communities. This we pray in the Name of our Lord God. **Amen.**

End of Year

Our Heavenly Father, we thank You for the year we have completed in the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, for its successes, and for the strength You have given us to overcome its failures. As we face a new year together, give us patience and understanding for all our comrades/sisters, wisdom in our decisions, and Your aid in building a better (VFW/Auxiliary) organization. Bestow Your special blessings upon all who will assume the duties of leadership this day, so that we may continue to serve our God and our Country. **Amen.**

(For the Sick) Lord, Almighty God, we pray Your healing grace in behalf of *(name)*. May *(name)* know the blessing of good health in this hour and throughout life. Bless all who minister to *(name)* in body, mid and spirit and grant that we may always give praise to you, our Heavenly Father. **Amen.**

O God the strength of the weak and the comfort of sufferers, mercifully accept our prayers in behalf of our comrades and loved ones who are ill or shut-in, remembering especially *(name)*. We know not what is best for them, but You know. Grant them patience and endurance, relief

from pain and suffering, and, if it be Your will, the blessing of a swift recovery, and finally that they may dwell with You in life everlasting. **Amen.**

(For World Peace) O God, source of all holy desires, right counsels and just works, grant us that peace which the world cannot give, so that we may be obedient to Your commands and that under Your protection, we may enjoy peace in our days and freedom from fear of our enemies. We ask this in Your great and holy Name. **Amen.**

(Traveler's Prayer) God our Father, You led Abraham from his home and guarded him all his wanderings. You guided him safely to the destination You had chosen for him. Be with us now as we travel. Be our safety every mile of the way. Make us attentive, cautious and concerned about our fellow travelers. Make our highways safe and keep us from all danger. Guide us to our destination for today and may it bring us one day closer to our final destination with You. We pray this in Jesus' Name. **Amen.**

(For Volunteers) John Wesley once prayed, "*O Lord, let us not live to be useless.*"

Let us offer our prayer:

O God, these good people have chosen **not** to be useless. They have volunteered their time and talents. We thank You for their precious gifts of service. We pray that You would keep them steadfast in their volunteer work and ministry; that it will continue to be a blessing to others and to those who volunteer. Help us so to live as to add more joy to the world, and the glory of Thy Name. **Amen.**

(For President's Month) Dear Heavenly Father, we gather here in this month of Presidents, giving thanks for this great Country and for the many freedoms afforded us under her flag. We are mindful of the many men and women who gave their all to preserve those freedoms. May their souls rest in peace. And for those suffering ravages of wars in hospitals and homes, we ask a special blessing. And, dear Lord, for the good of us all, we reverently ask that "God Bless America!" **Amen.**

(Prayer of St. Francis) Lord, make me an instrument of Your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy. Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal life. **Amen.**

VARIOUS OTHER PRAYERS

IN THE MORNING

Into thy hands, O God, I commend myself this day. Let thy presence be with me even to its close, that at night I may again give thanks unto thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Grant, O Lord, that I may not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, and manfully to fight under his banner against sin, the world, and the devil, and to continue Christ's faithful soldier and servant unto my life's end. *Amen.*

Defend, O Lord, this thy Child with thy heavenly grace; that I may continue thine for ever; and daily increase in thy Holy Spirit more and more, until I come unto thy everlasting kingdom.

Amen.

AT NIGHT

The God of peace himself sanctify me wholly, and may my spirit and soul and body be preserved entire without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Abide with us, O Lord, this night, and with all the sick and sorrowful, the forsaken and weary, to strengthen and to cheer, and to give rest. **Amen.**

Thine is the day, O Lord, and thine the night; Grant that the sun of righteousness may abide in our hearts, to drive away the darkness of evil thoughts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

O Lord, Lover of men, who forgives us our sins; Cleanse us of all that is base or selfish, and make us to be in all things thy servants, and the messengers of thy love. *Amen.*

Grant, O Lord, that we may meet all difficulties and temptations with a steadfast heart, in the strength of thy indwelling spirit. *Amen.*

Shield us, O God, from the darkness of soul which seeth thee not, and from the loneliness of heart which heareth not thy voice, and through life and in the valley of the shadow of death, forsake us not; for thy Name's sake. *Amen.*

Deepen and quicken in us, O God, a sense of thy Presence, and make us to know and feel that thou art more ready to teach and to give than we to ask or to learn; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O most merciful Redeemer, Friend, and Brother.
May I know thee more clearly,
May I love thee more dearly,
May I follow thee more nearly. *Amen.*

O Savior of the world, who by thy Cross and precious Blood hast redeemed us; Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord. *Amen.*

ON ENTERING CHURCH

O Lord, I am in thy holy House. Help me to keep my thoughts on thee, that I may hear thee speaking. *Amen.*

AT EARLY EUCHARIST

As watchmen look for the morning, so do we look for thee, O Christ. Come with the dawning day, and make thyself known to us in the breaking of Bread, for thou art our God for ever and ever. *Amen.*

BEFORE HOLY COMMUNION

Incline our hearts, O God, that by the grace of thy Holy Spirit we may worthily approach these sacred mysteries and offer ourselves to thee in answering love, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

AFTER CHURCH SERVICE

Sanctify, O Lord, both our coming in and our going forth; and grant that when we leave thy house we may not leave thy Presence, but be thou ever near unto us and keep us near unto thee, *Amen.*

AN ACT OF ADORATION

Worthy art thou, O God, to receive the honor and the power; for thou didst create all things, and because of thy will they are and were created.

GLORY BE TO THEE, O GOD.

Glory to thee, O Christ, who didst redeem with thy love men of every kindred and tongue and people and nation.

GLORY BE TO THEE, O CHRIST.

Glory to thee, O Holy Spirit, for thy work in the Church, which will not cease until thou hast made of all mankind one family, to the praise and glory of God.

FOR GOD'S HELP

Grant us, O Lord, in all our duties thy help, in all our perplexities thy counsel, in all our dangers thy protection, and in all our sorrows thy peace; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior. *Amen.*

Grant to us, Lord, we beseech thee, the spirit to think and do always such things as are right; that we, who cannot do any thing that is good without thee, may by thee be enabled to live according to thy will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

FOR GOD'S PROTECTION

O Almighty and most merciful God, of thy bountiful goodness keep us, we beseech thee, from all things that may hurt us; that we, being ready both in body and soul, may cheerfully accomplish those things which thou commands; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

We beseech thee, Almighty God, look upon the hearty desires of thy humble servants, and stretch forth the right hand of thy Majesty, to be our defense against all our enemies; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

FOR AID AGAINST PERILS

Lighten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night; for the love of thy only Son, our Savior, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

FOR GOD'S MERCY

O God, the protector of all that trust in thee, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy; Increase and multiply upon us thy mercy; that, thou being our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we finally lose not the things eternal. Grant this, O heavenly Father, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

FOR GUIDANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

O God, forasmuch as without thee we are not able to please thee; Mercifully grant that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

FOR CHRISTIAN GLADNESS

O God, Author of the world's joy, Bearer of the world's pain; At the heart of all our trouble and sorrow let unconquerable gladness dwell; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

FOR THE COMPANIONSHIP OF CHRIST

O blessed Christ, who didst draw near to thy disciples as they walked together by the way and were sad; So draw near to us as we journey along our daily way. Open to us the meaning of life, and reveal thyself as our strength and our companion; as thou art our Lord and Savior evermore. *Amen.*

FOR VICTORY OVER TEMPTATION

Grant us, O Lord, to pass this day in gladness and peace, without stumbling and without stain; that, reaching the eventide victorious over all temptation, we may praise thee, the eternal God, who art blessed, and dost govern all things, world without end. *Amen.*

FOR FIDELITY

Teach us, good Lord, to serve thee as thou deserves; to give and not to count the cost; to fight and not to heed the wounds; to toil and not to seek for rest; to labor and not to ask for any reward, save that of knowing that we do thy will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

FOR CONTROL OF SPEECH

O God, who knows how often we sin against thee with our tongues; Keep us free from all untrue and unkind words; consecrate our speech to thy service; and keep us often silent, that our hearts may speak to thee and may listen for thy voice; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

FOR LOYALTY

Almighty God, grant us thy gift of loyalty. For our homes, give us love and obedience; for our country, sacrifice and service; for our Church, reverence and devotion; and in everything make us true to thee; through thy Son, our Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

FOR THOSE WE LOVE

O Thou who hast ordered this wondrous world, who knows all things in earth and heaven; So fill our hearts with trust in thee, that by night and by day, at all times and in all seasons, we may without fear commit those who are dear to us to thy never-failing love, for this life and the life to come. *Amen.*

FOR LOYALTY TO OUR HOMES

Grant, O Lord, to those in the service of their country who have left wives and children at home, a steadfast loyalty through all the days of separation, that returning at length to their beloved they may know the joy of unbroken fidelity; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

FOR THE NATION

O eternal God, through whose mighty power our fathers won their liberties of old; Grant, we beseech thee, that we and all the people of this land may have grace to maintain these liberties in righteousness and peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

FOR ALL IN THE SERVICE OF OUR COUNTRY

O Almighty Lord God, who neither slumbers nor sleeps; Protect and assist, we beseech thee, all those who at home or abroad, by land, by sea, or in the air, are serving this country, that they, being armed with thy defense, may be preserved evermore in all perils; and being filled with wisdom and girded with strength, may do their duty to thy honor and glory. *Amen.*

FOR THE ARMY

O Lord God of Hosts, stretch forth, we pray thee, thine almighty arm to strengthen and protect the soldiers of our country. Support them in the day of battle, and in the time of peace keep them safe from all evil; endue them with courage and loyalty; and grant that in all things they may serve without reproach. *Amen.*

FOR THE NAVY

O eternal Lord God, who alone spreads out the heavens, and rules the raging of the sea; Vouchsafe to take into thy almighty and most gracious protection our country's Navy, and all

who serve therein. Preserve them from the dangers of the sea, and from the violence of the enemy; that they may be a safeguard unto the United States of America, and a security for such as pass on the seas upon their lawful occasions; that the inhabitants of our land may in peace and quietness serve thee our God. *Amen.*

FOR THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, AND ALL IN CIVIL AUTHORITY

Almighty God, whose kingdom is everlasting and power infinite; Have mercy upon this whole land; and so rule the hearts of thy servants THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, *The Governor of this State*, and all others in authority, that they, knowing whose ministers they are, may above all things seek thy honor and glory; and that we and all the People, duly considering whose authority they bear, may faithfully and obediently honor them, according to thy blessed Word and ordinance. *Amen.*

FOR THOSE IN AUTHORITY

O Lord God Almighty, guide, we pray thee, all those to whom thou hast committed the government of this nation, and grant to them at this time special gifts of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and strength; that upholding what is right, and following what is true, they may obey thy holy will and fulfill thy divine purpose. *Amen.*

FOR JUSTICE AND FREEDOM

O God, the King of righteousness, lead us, we pray thee, in ways of justice and peace; inspire us to break down all tyranny and oppression, to gain for every man his due reward, and from every man his due service; that each may live for all and all may care for each. *Amen.*

FOR WORLD PEACE

Almighty God, from whom all thoughts of truth and peace proceed; Kindle, we pray thee, in the hearts of all men the true love of peace, and guide with thy strong and peaceful wisdom those who take counsel for the nations of the earth, that in tranquility thy kingdom may go forward, till the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of thy love. *Amen.*

O Almighty God, who makes even the wrath of man to turn to thy praise; We beseech thee so to order and dispose the issue of this war that we may be brought through strife to a lasting peace, and that the nations of the world may be united in a firmer fellowship, for the promotion of thy glory and the good of all mankind. *Amen.*

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn but the sword of righteousness, and no strength known but the strength of love; So guide and inspire, we pray thee, the work of all who seek thy kingdom, that the nations may find their security not in force of arms but in that perfect love which casts out fear. *Amen.*

IN TIME OF WAR

O God, who sees that in this warfare we are seeking to serve thee, and yet in the waging of it must needs do many things that are an offence against thy love; Accept we pray thee, our imperfect offering. Arm us with thy Spirit that our warfare may further the victory of thy justice and truth. *Amen.*

FOR GRACE TO FORGIVE

Merciful God, in whose dear Son we have redemption, even the forgiveness of sins; Give us such strong belief in this the only power that can abolish evil that we shall be enabled to forgive our enemies; and grant us grace not only to forgive but to accept forgiveness . *Amen.*

FOR THE PERSECUTED

O blessed Lord, who thyself didst undergo the pain and suffering of the Cross; Uphold, we beseech thee, with thy promised gift of strength all those of our brethren who are suffering for their faith in thee. Grant that in the midst of all persecutions they may hold fast by this faith, and that from their steadfastness thy Church may grow in grace and we ourselves in perseverance, to the honor of thy Name. *Amen.*

FOR PRISONERS

We beseech thee, O God, for all prisoners and captives, and all who suffer from oppression, that thou wilt manifest thy mercy toward them, and make the heart of man merciful as thine own. *Amen.*

FOR THE LONELY

Have compassion, O most merciful Lord, on all who are lonely and desolate. Be thou their Comforter and Friend; give them such earthly solace as thou sees to be best for them; and bring them to the fuller knowledge of thy love. *Amen.*

FOR THOSE WHO MOURN

Almighty God, Father of mercies and giver of all comfort; Deal graciously, we pray thee, with all those who mourn, that, casting every care on thee, they may know the consolation of thy love. *Amen.*

FOR THOSE WHO MINISTER TO THE WOUNDED AND SICK

O merciful God, whose blessed Son went about doing good; Uphold with thy strength and grace those who do service to the wounded and the sick; grant to the ministers of thy gospel faithfulness and love, to the physicians and surgeons wisdom and skill, to the nurses sympathy and patience; and we beseech thee to protect and bless them in all dangers, anxieties, and labors. *Amen.*

FOR THOSE WOUNDED IN WAR

O Lord, we pray thee to have mercy upon all who are this day wounded and suffering. Though kindred and friends be far away, let thy grace be their comfort. Raise them to health again, if it be thy good pleasure; but chiefly give them patience and faith in thee. *Amen.*

FOR THE DYING

Unto God's gracious mercy and protection we commit you. The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace, both now and evermore. *Amen.*

FOR ONE DEPARTED

Almighty God, we remember this day before thee thy faithful servant (*N.*), and we pray thee that, having opened to *him* the gates of larger life, thou wilt receive *him* more and more into thy joyful service; that *he* may win, with thee and thy servants everywhere, the eternal victory. *Amen.*

BENEDICTIONS

The grace of our great God, and the love of our great God, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

The Lord bless us and keep us. The Lord make his face to shine upon us, and be gracious unto us. The Lord lift up his countenance upon us, and give us peace, this night and evermore. *Amen.*

SPECIAL DISCIPLINARY HEARING

Invocation

Almighty God, with humble hearts and a sense of the responsibility placed on us by our comrades of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, we ask your blessings, on each person involved in this Special Hearing this evening. Help us to exercise good judgment and to use wisdom as we proceed. May we carry out our responsibility with courage, with conviction, and with civility. **Amen.**

Benediction

Almighty God, whose great Commandment is that we shall love our neighbors as ourselves, and who has taught us that we should do to others as we would have them do to us, we ask Your continued blessing upon us as we seek to live as good citizens. Continue to bless the Veterans of Foreign Wars and particularly, _____ Post _____. May each who enter this facility practice true comradeship and may each person's life be enriched by the spirit of true comradeship. Let us depart in peace, and in love and charity. **Amen**

GEO WASHINGTON'S PRAYER FOR NATION

Almighty GOD; we make our earnest prayer that Thou wilt keep *each one of us*, and the United States in Thy holy protection, that thou wilt incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government; and entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another and for their fellow citizens of the United States of America at large. And finally that Thou wilt most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy and to demean ourselves with charity, and humility of mind. Grant our supplication, we beseech thee, Amen

- George Washington -

April 30th, 1789

George Washington's prayer was adapted from his Circular Letter to the Governors of the United States

RECOMMENDATIONS & GUIDELINES FOR INCLUSIVE PUBIC PRAYERS

“Inclusive” public prayer in a pluralistic society is effective when the person leading the prayer is sensitive to the diversity of his/her audience. Those who lead general community prayers have a responsibility to have a clear understanding about the public nature of the occasion and respectful of the makeup of the audience.

- Prayer on behalf of the entire community is most honoring of all peoples’ faith traditions when listeners from a wide range of religious practices can share the experience and when the language is non-offensive to their faith traditions.
- Inclusive public prayer is non-sectarian, general, and carefully planned to respect the ground that diverse faith traditions have in common.
- An intentional effort to pray using universal, inclusive language helps bridge the gap among the faith traditions:

For example: Using opening language about God such as: ***Source of All Being; Creator and Sustainer; Our Maker; and Almighty God***, or using closing words like, ***Hear our prayer; May Goodness Flourish; In the Name of All we hold Sacred;*** or ***Amen***, can help to frame the prayer so that those gathered can affirm their personal faith tradition and still participate in a community expression of reverence.

- Inclusive public prayer remains faithful to the purpose of acknowledging the Divine Presence, giving thanks, and seeking blessing, and should not be used as a forum to preach, persuade, or testify.

APPENDIX

HOSPITAL VISITATION

Chaplains of the Veterans of Foreign Wars do not need to have formal religious training in order to become an effective visitor to hospital patients. A *caring* personality is one of the greatest qualifications.

Preparation:

The chaplain's preparation begins with his/her own maturity and experience with God. This is the spring that feeds the streams of spirituality and waters the arid fields of their own life and ministry.

Guidelines for Visitation:

- 1- Learn the purpose of the health care facility you are visiting. Familiarize yourself with the protocol and regulations.
 - Visiting hours
 - Clergy registry, if they have one
 - If possible, meet with the resident chaplain
- 2- Respect patient and family wishes regarding visits.
- 3- Respect the privacy and nursing needs before entering the room. Check with floor nurse if patient's door is closed.
- 4- If there is more than one patient in the room, be sensitive to that person's needs.
- 5- Make your visit brief! (You are not calling on the patient to entertain them.)
- 6- Express your concern but do not inquire about their specific condition.
- 7- Listen more than talk!
- 8- Be sensitive in your physical approach to the patient; don't sit of the bed.
- 9- If the patient is asleep or medicated, don't arouse them; leave your card with a note that you called at a certain time.
- 10- Patients often will appreciate a brief prayer. Always ask before offering a prayer.
- 11- If the patient has a roommate, you might ask if he/she would like to be included in the prayer.
- 12- If practical, make a follow-up visit after they are home, or send a card. Your continual concern is a mark of your ministry.

FUNERALS OR MEMORIAL SERVICES

Functions of a Funeral:

- Provide a framework of supportive relationship for mourners.
- Reinforces the reality of death.
- Provides a fitting conclusion to the life of the deceased.
- Encourages the expression of grief.

The VFW Chaplain may be called upon to conduct a Memorial Service or Funeral Service for a deceased comrade. If you agree to conduct a service, there are some guidelines you should follow.

1. If the Funeral Director did not contact you regarding the funeral, you should contact the Funeral Home as soon as possible, You will need the following information:
 - Date, time and place of funeral.
 - Place of burial or interment.
 - Whether the Funeral Director will provide transportation, or whether you will use your own vehicle.
 - Date, time and place of visitation.
 - Key family contact person (spouse, child, etc.)
2. Contact key family person and ask:
 - Are there any specific requests for the service?
 - Are there any special scripture passages, poems, or writings they would like to be used?
 - Will the family have a representative present a eulogy?
 - What was the deceased philosophy of life and his/her religious background?
 - “What would you like me to mention about _____ that would be meaningful to the family and friends?”

Purposes of the Service:

- The Service is **for** the living.
- The Service is **about** the deceased.
- **Affirmation** of the great spiritual truths of life.
“The human hunger to hear God’s reassurance amid the mysteries of death should be carried out in every message.”

Resources:

- Minister’s Manuals (can be purchased at bookstores)
- Funeral Manual (Certain Funeral Directors provide.)
- The Scriptures

Procedure For Viewing at a Funeral Home

Day and Date of Viewing

Time of Viewing.

Place of Viewing _____ Funeral Home

Address of Viewing

_____ was a veteran of the Korean War and a lifetime member of the VFW Post _____

Procedure for Viewing at the Funeral Home

- Walk in single file up to the casket.
- Pause for a moment of silence.
- Attention: Present Arms
- Order Arms: At Ease
- Proceed in single file to offer condolences to family:

Wife: Name (Married _____ years)

Daughter: _____

Daughter's Husband: _____

Son: _____

Son's Wife: _____

Grandson: _____

Brother- in-law: _____

Brother in law's Wife: _____

A Simple Order of Service for Funeral

(Quiet Meditative Music, provided by the Funeral Director)

A Brief Obituary may be read

Opening Sentences *(may be Scripture verse)*

Prayer

Reading of Scriptures *(may be three to five passages)*

Meditation

Closing Prayer

(“Services will be continued at graveside.”)

TEMPLATE FOR PROTESTANT FUNERAL MEMORIAL SERVICE

Name of Deceased _____

Age _____

August 23, 1946 - May 30, 2010

Purpose: To provide comfort and hope with a sensitive caring attitude. Acknowledge the pain of Grief and affirm the hope of the Gospel.

Welcome

The family of _____ is grateful for your presence here this morning and the many words of consolation and encouragement they have received during this time of bereavement.

Read Obituary

John 6:40 *For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son, and believes in Him, has eternal life; and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.*

Song: *He The Pearly Gates Will Open*

Refrain:
He the pearly gates will open, So that I may enter in;
For He purchased my redemption And forgave me all my sin.

Love divine, so great and wondrous! All my sins He then forgave;
I will sing His praise forever, For His blood, His power to save.

In life's eventide, at twilight, At His door I'll knock and wait;
By the precious blood of Jesus I shall enter heaven's gate.

And Jesus opened those pearly gates and on Sunday, May 30 Ed was welcomed into heaven.

Prayer: Our Loving Eternal Heavenly Father, as we meet this morning to remember _____, a dear brother, loved one, a friend and comrade to those present. We ask you to be the God of all comfort, and the God of

all grace. Use the elements of this Memorial Service to give us perspective and hope as we face the reality of death. Amen.

Poem and Verses of Comfort Poem

There is no time that we could set for parting.

We who must remain are never ready for such pain.

Even our prayer would be: "Not yet! Not yet, dear God - -
Another day with us, Let our beloved stay."

We must believe, when falls that blow,

That wisely God has willed it so.

Edgar A. Guest

And so we turn to the Scriptures to give us comfort and hope.

In **John 11:25** "Jesus said, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies;

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

¹⁶Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

For we know that if the tent, which is our earthly home, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in heaven.

Isaiah 41:13

¹³For I am the LORD, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, do not fear I will help you.

Special Tribute and Remembrance

_____ enlisted in the U.S. Navy Reserves and was honorably discharged in 1968 after serving on the USS Forrestal aircraft carrier in the Gulf of Tonkin, Vietnam during the Vietnam War.

_____ On behalf of the Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, I present this **evergreen tribute** as a symbol of our undying love for our comrade. (*Step forward and lay a piece of evergreen*

on the casket. Salute - - and return to your place in line)

_____ In honor of Ed and his Military service, I place this **white flower** as a symbol of pure, unselfish devotion upon this casket. May each of us seek to emulate such pure unselfish devotion to God, our country, our profession, and our families..
(Step forward and lay a white flower on the casket. Salute - - and return to your place in line)

_____ On behalf of our glorious republic, for whose integrity Ed and his fellow comrades willingly served, we place upon Ed's casket this **small flag** of the United States. It is the emblem of our country and symbol of individual and personal liberty.
(Step forward and lay flag on the casket. Salute - - and return to your place in line)

Meditation

Dying and death are not beautiful. Death is one of the ugly realities of life, a reality which we must all face. It separates the spirit from the body, a brother from his sisters, and a friend from friends. We are torn by the loss of the person we loved. Our gathering here this morning is to honor the memory of _____. It is also to find comfort and affirm the hope of the Gospel

When we hear of the death of a friend or loved one, even when it is expected, we grieve.

It is natural to have a REACTION.

There is the initial shock. And from there the reaction varies. Some weep - some do not.

It is OK to have a reaction – Our Lord understands. I encourage you to allow it to happen and share your feelings with the Lord.

We can REFLECT and we can REMEMBER

Concern of those who Die

1. Desire of individuals in the OT was not to have the individual lost to memory. This is one reason they desired a son - to carry on the name of the deceased.

We Remember Them

At the rising of the sun and at its going down – We remember him
At the blowing of the wind and the chill of winter - We remember him
At the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring - We remember him
At the blueness of the skies and in the warmth of summer - We remember him
At the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of autumn - We remember him
At the beginning of the year and when it ends - We remember him
As long as we live, he too will live on; for Bob is a part of us and we will remember him
Memories can grow sweeter as the years go by

We REALIZE

1. How quickly life passes.

He was just here and now he is gone

At a time like this we are reminded of our own mortality. We realize once more that our days are numbered. That is why he tells us in 90:12 to “number our days” so we live them with skill.

2. We Realize that death is not the end.

- a. When death comes there is a release of the spirit from the body
- b. There is a reception in heaven

God has provided salvation for each of us. Remember **John 3:16**: “For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.”

God provided salvation for all. However, there is a requirement.- We have to believe and accept it.

2 Peter 1:10-11 (The Message)

10-11 “So, friends, confirm God's invitation to you, his choice of you. Don't put it off; do it now. Do this, and you'll have your life on a firm footing, the streets paved and the way wide open into the eternal kingdom of our Master and Savior, Jesus Christ.” (The Message)

Committal

In the light of these promises God has given us in His Word and in as much as it has pleased the Lord in His sovereign wisdom and purpose to take _____, from our midst, whom we have loved, we now commit his body to its final resting place to await the fulfillment of another promise of Scripture.

In a few moments we will say bye for now _____. . .
Bye for now . . .

Prayer

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the glorious hope and for the great consolation concerning those who sleep in Jesus as believers in Christ.

May we remember that Jesus has prepared a place for those who have placed their faith in Him, and that the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

And now for the family, for the loved ones and friends we ask:

- That precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His saints ;
- That there might be a casting of our care upon you to find comfort in the knowledge of what death means to _____ who is now with you; and
- That you would comfort and strengthen in the days ahead. Help the family and friends to draw strength from you.

These things we ask in the name of the King of kings and Lord of lords, even in Christ our Savior.

Benediction

May the good memories of Teddy, the peace of God, and the grace of God be with each person as we continue our journey in the days ahead.

Template for Gravesite Service

Name of Deceased

Day and Date

Graveside Service

_____ Cemetery

_____ was a veteran of the Korean War and a lifetime member of the VFW Post _____

Procedure for Graveside Service

- Muster near Hearse and walk as a group following casket to the gravesite
- Following the religious ceremony by the Pastor VFW Members present will follow Chaplain _____ - - walk in single file up to the casket (facing seated family).

Chaplain: We, the members of _____ Post _____, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States are here to pay a lasting tribute of respect to _____, our departed comrade.

When the call of our country was heard, _____ answered that call. _____ was a veteran of the Korean War and a lifetime member of the VFW Post 6393. As a brave man he served faithfully with an abiding faith in God, his country and his flag.

Following his military service, he served as _____
_____ years before retiring in _____.

_____ On behalf of _____ Post _____, veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, I present this **evergreen tribute** as a symbol of our undying love for our comrade. At the opening of each of our Post Meetings we will take time to remember _____ and the rest of our departed comrades. *(Step forward and lay a piece of evergreen on the casket. Salute - - and return to your place in line)*

_____ In honor of _____, I place this white flower as a symbol of pure, unselfish devotion upon this casket. May each of us seek to emulate such pure unselfish devotion to God, our country, our profession, and our families.. *(Step forward and lay a white flower on the casket. Salute - - and return to your place in line)*

_____ On behalf of our glorious republic, for whose integrity our comrades of the Veterans of Foreign Wars willingly served, we place upon _____'s casket this small flag of the United States. It is the emblem of our country and symbol of individual and personal liberty.

(Step forward and lay flag on the casket. Salute - - and return to your place in line)

Chaplain:

Poem

There is no time that we could set for parting.
We who must remain are never ready for such pain.
Even our prayer would be: "Not yet! Not yet, dear God

- -

Another day with us, Let our beloved stay."
We must believe, when falls that blow,
That wisely God has willed it so.

Edgar A. Guest

Committal

In the light of the promises God has given us in His Word and in as much as it has pleased the Lord in His sovereign wisdom and purpose to take _____ from our midst, we now commit his body to its final resting place to await the fulfillment of the promises of Scripture.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, Comfort us as we remember the scriptures that says, "God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. Amen

Folding of Flag

When flag is folded, signal is given to play taps.
When Taps begins, Present Arms

Playing of Taps

- Remain at Casket while Taps is played
- At the conclusion of Taps, Order Arms

Presentation of Flag to Family

On behalf of a grateful nation and _____ Post _____ we present this flag in honor of your loved one.

- This concludes _____ Post _____'s service for _____.
- Detail retires and Funeral director gives final instructions.
- Detail waits and at the end of the procession, pays final respects by placing a poppy on the casket.

Template for Memorial Service

Name of Deceased

Date of Service

Memorial Service

_____, a WWII Veteran served in the United States Army as a Headquarters company clerk and as a project coordinator in General MacArthur's map room. He/She completed his/her duty to our nation in Japan during the Korean War and achieved the rank of staff sergeant.

Procedure for Memorial Service

- Muster and proceed as a group to designated positions.
- VFW Members present will follow Chaplain _____ (walk in single file up to designated positions (facing seated family)).

Commander or Chaplain: We, the members of _____ Post _____, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States are here to pay a lasting tribute of respect to _____, our departed comrade.

When the call of our country was heard, _____ answered that call.

_____ was a WWII Veteran who served in the United States Army as a Headquarters company clerk and as a project coordinator in General MacArthur's map room. He/She completed his/her duty to our nation in Japan during the Korean War and achieved the rank of staff sergeant.

As a brave comrade she served faithfully with an abiding faith in God, her country and her flag.

Following her military service, he/she served . . .

_____ On behalf of _____ Post _____, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, I present this **evergreen tribute** as a symbol of our undying love for our comrade. At the opening of each of our Post Meetings we will take time to remember _____ and the rest of our departed comrades.

(Step forward and lay a piece of evergreen on _____. Salute - - and return to your place in line)
_____ In honor of _____, I place this white flower as a symbol of pure, unselfish devotion.

May each of us seek to emulate such pure unselfish devotion to God, our country, our profession, and our families..

(Step forward and lay a white flower on the _____. Salute - - and return to your place in line)

_____ On behalf of our glorious republic, for whose integrity our comrades and Veterans of Foreign Wars willingly served, we place this small flag of the United States. It is the emblem of our country and symbol of individual and personal liberty.

(Step forward and lay flag on the casket. Salute - - and return to your place in line)

Chaplain:

Poem

There is no time that we could set for parting.
We who must remain are never ready for such pain.
Even our prayer would be: "Not yet! Not yet, dear God -

-
Another day with us, Let our beloved stay."

We must believe, when falls that blow,
That wisely God has willed it so.

Edgar A. Guest

Committal

In the light of the promises God has given us in His Word and in as much as it has pleased the Lord in His sovereign wisdom and purpose to take _____ from our midst and her body was committed to its final resting place to await the fulfillment of the promises of Scripture.

Prayer

Heavenly Father, Comfort us as we remember the scriptures that says, "*God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.* Amen

Folding of Flag

When flag is folded, signal is given to play taps.
When Taps begins, Present Arms

Playing of Taps

- Remain in position while Taps is played
- At the conclusion of Taps, Order Arms

Presentation of Flag to Family

On behalf of a grateful nation and _____ Post _____ we present this flag in honor of your loved one.

- This concludes _____ Post _____'s service for _____.
- Detail retires.

Committal (at Graveside)

Words of Scripture

Prayer

Prayer of Committal:

Gracious and Merciful God, into Your hands we commend Your departed child, _____ in the sure hope of the Resurrection. This body we commit to the ground (or elements of creation or the deep of the sea), earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord henceforth. "Blessed indeed," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds do follow them!"

Lord's Prayer

Benediction

Military Honors, if requested by family.

MILITARY HONORS AT FUNERALS

On October 5th, 1999, President Clinton signed into law the National Defense Authorization Act, Public Law 105-261. Some of the key features of the law are:

- The law mandates military participation in a Military Honors Ceremony **upon request**.
- Funeral Directors will be the reference person for requesting military participation in rendering Military Honors.
- Military personnel to perform this ceremony shall consist of two or more uniformed members of the Armed Forces, with at least one member from the service in which the deceased Veteran served.
- Members of **Veterans Service Organizations (VSO)** are encouraged to participate in rendering Military Honors and to augment military funeral details when requested. The law allows reimbursement of expenses for members of VSOs, however, a final decision on reimbursement policy has not been established as yet. The Military Services have been requested to conduct training for those VSO elements which will be participating in providing Military Honors for a deceased Veteran.
- Members of the National Guard and Reserves are also encouraged to participate in Military Honors Ceremonies and will receive an allowance of \$150/day as well as retirement points.

Due to the limited number of buglers in the Military Services, a recorded version of “Tapes” is often used. To ensure quality of playback, the Department of Defense has recorded the playing of “Taps” at Arlington National Cemetery on compact discs and made them available to Funeral Directors, to the VSOs, and to participating military units.

Other References:

Department of Defense Instruction (DoD) (**MILITARY FUNERAL SUPPORT**)
No. 1300.15 (Oct. 22, 2007)

TITLE 10, US Code – ARMED FORCES
Chapter 49 – MISCELLANEOUS PROHIBITIONS AND PENALTIES
Subtitle A – General Military Law
Part II – PERSONNEL

TITLE 10, US Code – ARMED FORCES
Chapter 75 – DECEASED PERSONNEL
Subchapter II - DEATH BENEFITS

TITLE 38, US Code – VETERANS BENEFITS
Part II – GENERAL BENEFITS,
Chapter 24 – NATIONAL CEMETERIES AND MEMORIALS

**A Recommended Joint Memorial Ceremony
VFW and their Ladies Auxiliary
For Department, Conference, District or Post**

(The place of assembly should be arranged as for a regular session of the order. In addition, a table with covering and open Bible shall be placed with the Conductress and Color Bearers in their respective places. Titles used in the following are for Department, Conference, District and Post, Commander or Conference President, Chief of Staff or Sergeant-at-Arms.)

(Commander and Ladies Auxiliary President take their stations. The Commander calls the session to order with one rap of the gavel.)

Commander: Comrades, Ladies Auxiliary and friends, we meet at this time to honor the memory of our comrades and sisters who have answered the last call.

Ladies Auxiliary President: Color Bearers. Prepare the altar for the Memorial Ceremony.

(Motion to rise.)

(Color Bearers with Conductress retire and return with the Memorial Cloth, Bible and flowers.)

Ladies Auxiliary President: (Motion to be seated.)

Madam Conductress and Sergeant-at-Arms, you will see that there is no disturbance during the ceremony.

Conductress and Sergeant-at-Arms: Madam President, your orders will be obeyed.

Commander: I request the Chaplains to preside during this solemn ceremony.

VFW Chaplain and Ladies Auxiliary Chaplain: Comrade Commander, we are at your service and shall endeavor to perform this solemn duty in the spirit of faith, hope and charity.

(Chaplains will assume the station.)

VFW Chaplain: We will now have the lighting of the POW/MIA candle and the Armed Forces Vigil candle by the Commander and the Ladies Auxiliary President.

(The Commander and the Ladies Auxiliary President will light the two appropriate candles escorted by the Sergeant-at-Arms. VFW Chaplain will offer a prayer.)

VFW Chaplain: O God, Almighty, Creator and Ruler of the Universe, some of our comrades and companions are prisoners of war and missing in action. Comfort them, we pray, in their isolation from their homes and loved ones; supply their needs and protect them from want and deprivation; strengthen and sustain them that they may face discouragement with courage and hardship with resolution. Grant that they may find patience to endure and peace in the knowledge of Your continuing presence.

O God, we ask that You will strengthen and protect all our members of the armed forces of the United States of America. In the day of battle, may they be courageous and strong, resourceful and capable, resolute and victorious. In the time of peace, may they serve with dignity and honor, as effective emissaries of good will for this Nation. May their devotion and loyalty to You and to their homeland inspire them in moments of challenge and comfort them in tribulation and long separations from loved ones. And, finally, we ask they may return safely to serve You and our Country in the days and years to come. Amen.

Ladies Auxiliary Chaplain: (Motion to rise.)

Comrades, Sisters and Friends, will you join me in singing one verse of "*Nearer, My God, To Thee.*"

Nearer my God to Thee, Nearer to Thee!

E'en tho' it be a cross that raiseth me;

Still all my song shall be

Nearer my God to Thee!

Nearer my God to Thee!

Nearer to Thee!

(Motion to be seated.)

VFW Chaplain: Comrade Commander, to whom should we look for help in the battles of life?

Commander: “Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made heaven and earth.”

Ladies Auxiliary Chaplain: Madam President of the Ladies Auxiliary, what assurances have we of a prolonged stay among the scenes and activities of life?

Ladies Auxiliary President: “For we are aliens and pilgrims before You, as were all our fathers; our days on earth are as a shadow and without hope.”

VFW Chaplain: Comrade Senior Vice Commander, have you a message of condolence for those bereaved?

Senior Vice Commander: As a father pities his children, so the Lord pities those who fear Him. For he knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.

VFW Chaplain: What message has the Chaplain of the Ladies Auxiliary?

Ladies Auxiliary Chaplain: I have a message of hope that should inspire our comrades at this solemn moment and all through life. The message is from our sacred scriptures, assuring us that there is life after death and whoever is faithful to the end, shall inherit eternal life.

VFW Chaplain: Comrades and Sisters, we are thankful for these inspiring thoughts. Let us learn the lesson of the hour which is that we, too, are nearing the end of life’s pilgrimage and sooner or later these services may be held in our memory. Let us so live that when our summons comes we may depart with a good conscience, in the comfort of a sincere religion, belief in God, and perfect charity toward all mankind. Madam Chaplain, would you offer a prayer.

Ladies Auxiliary Chaplain: (Motion to rise.)

Let us pray. Our Father in Heaven, at this time of remembrance, we seek You, with whom there is no death. We ask You, in Your everlasting charity, to look down on these, Your servants, and give them health, strength and willingness to carry on the work of our beloved organization, which shall be an everlasting memorial to those comrades and sisters who have passed on. In Your great infinite wisdom and mercy, may we all meet again, and we shall praise Your name, now and forever. Amen.

(Motion to be seated.)

VFW Chaplain: Comrades and sisters, in commemorating the virtues of our departed heroes who served their country in time of need we now offer our symbolic tributes.

(Department Commander and Ladies Auxiliary President will proceed to the Altar. If the ceremony is for a Department, Conference or District, the respective commanders and presidents will stand and may present the flowers on the altar when their department or district is called.)

Ladies Auxiliary Chaplain: Comrade Commander and Madam President, what tribute have you to offer at this time?

Ladies Auxiliary President: These white flowers we bring as a token of the love we have for our departed Comrades and Sisters.

(Department Commander and Madam President return to their stations. Flowers may be presented by other Districts or Departments.)

VFW Chaplain: Comrade Adjutant and Madam Secretary will now call the Roll of deceased members. (Reading of the deceased members' names or numbers of deceased members in their respective Departments or Districts.)

(“Sleep Soldier Boy” or other appropriate music may be offered at this time.)

VFW Chaplain: (If there is a Memorial Speaker, the Department Chaplain will give an introduction.)

Ladies Auxiliary Chaplain: Let us sing “America.” (Motion to rise)

VFW Chaplain: Let us pray. Heavenly Father, as today we remember and honor the memory of our departed comrades and sisters, we are indeed grateful for their service and sacrifice. May we continue their efforts as courageous protectors and true guardians of freedom. Let us be masters of brotherly and sisterly love.

O Lord, guide us in the way of moral responsibility and enlighten us and make us true believers in justice and peace. Enkindle within us a flame of selfless, unwavering devotion to duty that we may never be found wanting in those qualities of spirit and mind which alone are able to preserve our homes, the peace of our Nation, and the tranquility of the world. Remember our departed comrades and sisters, O Lord, in Your mercy, and have compassion on us. Amen.

Sergeant-at-Arms: Attention Comrades and Sisters.

Present Arms! Comrade Bugler!

("Taps" will be played.)

Ladies Auxiliary President: Madam Conductress, you will retire the Memorial Cloth.

(Memorial Cloth is retired.)

VFW Chaplain: This now concludes our service.

THE HISTORY OF LOYALTY DAY

Loyalty Day is observed on May 1 in the United States. It is a day set aside for the reaffirmation of loyalty to the United States and for the recognition of the heritage of American freedom.

The holiday was first observed in 1921 as "Americanization Day," and was intended to counterbalance the celebration of Labor Day on May Day (May 1), an internationally celebrated holiday which was perceived as communist.

Loyalty Day is celebrated with parades and ceremonies in several U.S. communities, although many people in the United States remain unaware of it. Although a legal holiday, it is not a federal holiday, and is not commonly observed.

It was made an official holiday by the U.S. Congress on July 18, 1958 (Public Law 85-529). Following the passage of this law, President Dwight D. Eisenhower proclaimed May 1, 1959 the first official observance of Loyalty Day.

In 2007 President George W. Bush issued an official proclamation of the May 1, 2007 Loyalty Day in accordance with the 1958 Congressional declaration,[6] as have many of his predecessors:

- * Bill Clinton, proclamation 6556 (May 1, 1993)
- * George H. W. Bush, proclamation 5962 (April 28, 1989)
- * Ronald Reagan, proclamation 4836 (April 14, 1981)
- * Jimmy Carter, proclamation 4493 (March 23, 1977)
- * Gerald Ford, proclamation 4354 (March 4, 1975)
- * John F. Kennedy, proclamation 3528 (April 18, 1963)

THE HISTORY OF MEMORIAL DAY

Memorial Day was originally known as Decoration Day. It was a time set aside to honor the nation's Civil War dead by "decorating" their graves. It was first observed on May 30, 1868, to commemorate the sacrifices of Civil War soldiers. During this first celebration of Decoration Day, General James Garfield made a speech at Arlington National Cemetery after which 5,000 participants helped to decorate the graves of the more than 20,000 Union and Confederate soldiers buried in the cemetery.

This 1868 celebration inspired local observances in several towns throughout America. By the late 1800s, many communities across the country had begun to celebrate Decoration Day and, after World War I, observances also began to honor those who had died in all of America's wars.

In 1966, the Federal government, under the direction of President Lyndon Johnson, declared Waterloo, New York, the official birthplace of Memorial Day. They chose Waterloo because the town had made Memorial Day an annual, community-wide event since their first celebration on May 5, 1866, during which businesses closed and residents decorated the graves of soldiers with flowers and flags. (Other towns have claimed to be the birthplace of this celebration including Boalsburg, Pennsylvania.)

In 1971, Congress declared Memorial Day a National Holiday to be celebrated the last Monday in May.

HISTORY OF THE TAPS

Of all the military bugle calls, none is so easily recognized or more apt to render emotion than Taps. Up to the Civil War, the traditional call at day's end was a tune, borrowed from the French, called Lights Out. In July of 1862, in the aftermath of the bloody Seven Days battles, hard on the loss of 600 men and wounded himself, Union General Daniel Adams Butterfield called the brigade bugler to his tent. He thought "Lights Out" was too formal and he wished to honor his men. Oliver Wilcox Norton, the bugler, tells the story, "...showing me some notes on a staff written in pencil on the back of an envelope, (he) asked me to sound them on my bugle. I did this several times, playing the music as written. He changed it somewhat, lengthening some notes and shortening others, but retaining the melody as he first gave it to me. After getting it to his satisfaction, he directed me to sound that call for Taps thereafter in place of the regulation call. The music was beautiful on that still summer night and was heard far beyond the limits of our Brigade. The next day I was visited by several buglers from neighboring Brigades, asking for copies of the music which I gladly furnished. The call was gradually taken up through the Army of the Potomac."

This more emotive and powerful Taps was soon adopted throughout the military. In 1874 it was officially recognized by the U.S. Army. It became standard at military funeral ceremonies in 1891. There is something singularly beautiful and appropriate in the music of this wonderful call. Its strains are melancholy, yet full of rest and peace. Its echoes linger in the heart long after its tones have ceased to vibrate in the air.

- from an article by Master Sergeant Jari A Villanueva, USAF.

VFW RESOURCES

National Headquarters

406 West 34th Street
Kansas City, MO 64111 (phone) 816-757-6411
www.vfw.org

VFW Veterans Helpline

(VA Questions, concerns or issues)
call: 800- VFW-1899

The VFW Emblem & Supply

www.patrioticware.com

VFW National Home For Children

3573 South Waverly Road
Eaton Rapids, MI 48827 (phone) 800-424-8360
www.vfwnationalhome.org

VFW Motto: "Honor the Dead By Serving the Living."

National Headquarters

Ladies Auxiliary VFW

406 West 34th Street
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1st AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise of thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

**2nd AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION
OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

“A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.”

SUGGESTED SCRIPTURE READINGS (for Funerals)

Old Testament:

Psalm 1	Psalm 103
Psalm 6	Psalm 112
Psalm 8	Psalm 119: 9-16
Psalm 16: 8-11	Psalm 121
Psalm 19	Psalm 130
Psalm 23	Psalm 139
Psalm 25	Proverbs 31: 10-31 (wife)
Psalm 46	Ecclesiastes 3: 1-13
Psalm 90	Isaiah 40: 27-31
Psalm 91	Isaiah 43 (selected verses)
Psalm 100	Isaiah 55: 1-3, 6-13

Epistles:

Romans 8 (excerpts)
Romans 10: 8-13
Romans 14: 7-9
1 Corinthians 13 (selected verses)
1 Corinthians 15 (selected verses)
1 Corinthians 15 (selected verses)
Philippians 4: 4-9
1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18
1 Timothy 1: 15-17
2 Timothy 4: 6-8
Revelation 21: 1-7
Revelation 21 (selected verses)

Gospels:

Matthew 10: 27-33
Luke 6: 36-38
John 3: 14-16
John 5: 24-29
John 11: 25-26
John 14: 1-11, 15-16, 25-27

GENERAL SCRIPTURE READINGS

Ecclesiastes 3:1-11a	For everything there is a season
Isaiah 26: 3-4	Trust in the Lord forever
Isaiah 35:1-10	Restoration of all that is broken
Isaiah 40:28-31	The weak shall renew their strength
Isaiah 43:1-3a, 18-19, 25	When you pass through the waters
Isaiah 53:3-5	With his stripes are we healed
Isaiah 61:1-6a	Good tidings to the afflicted
Psalms 13	Trust in the midst of suffering (A prayer of pain and sorrow)
Psalms 23	You have anointed my head with oil
Psalms 27	God is the strength of my life
Psalms 30	Recovery from grave illness
Psalms 41	Assurance of God's help
Psalms 42	My soul longs for You
Psalms 51:1-12, 15-17	Create in me a clean heart
Psalms 91	Refuge under God's wings
Psalms 103	God forgives all your sins
Psalms 121	My help comes from God.
Psalms 130	Out of the depths
Psalms 138	Fulfill your purpose for me
Psalms 139	The inescapable God
Psalms 146	God lifts the bowed down
Matthew 5:1-12	Blessed are they
Matthew 8:1-13	The healing of a leper and a servant
Matthew 10:1-8	Jesus sends the disciples to heal
Matthew 11:28-30	All who labor and are heavy laden
Matthew 15:21-28	The Canaanite woman's faith
Matthew 26:36-39	Not what I want but what You want
Mark 1:21-28	Jesus heals man with unclean spirit
Mark 5:21-43	Girl restored to life; woman healed
Mark 6:7-13	Anointing of the sick with oil
Mark 6:53-56	People brought the sick to Jesus
Mark 8:22-26	The blind man at Bethsaida
Luke 5:17-26	Take up your bed and walk
Luke 7:11-19	Jesus raises the widow's son
Luke 17:11-19	Thanksgiving for healing
John 3:16-17	God so loved the world
John 5:2-18	Do you want to be healed?
Acts 3:1-10	Peter and John heal the lame man
Acts 5:12-16	Healings in Jerusalem
Romans 8	Nothing can separate us from God's love
Romans 14:7-9	We are the Lord's
Romans 8: 31-39	Nothing can separate us from God's love.
2 Corinthians 1:3-5	God comforts us in affliction
2 Corinthians 4:16-18	What can be seen is temporary
Colossians 1:11-29	May you be strengthened with all power
James 5:13-16	Is any among you sick?
1 John 4:16b-19	The confidence we have in Christ
Revelation 21:1-4	New heaven and new earth

GREAT BIBLE CHAPTERS ON

Abiding	John 15
Love	1 Corinthians 13
Faith	Hebrews 11
Heaven	Revelation 21
Peace	John 14

WHAT TO READ WHEN

In Sorrow	John 14
In Danger	Psalms 91
Good Seems Distant	Psalms 139
Discouraged	Isaiah 40
Faith Fails	Hebrews 11
Depressed	Psalms 34
Need Companionship	Psalms 23
You Are Worried	Matthew 6:19-34
You Need Forgiveness	Psalms 51
Life Seems Empty	John 15
You Feel Cheated	Psalms 103
Friends Fail You	Psalms 27
Sleepless	Psalms 4:4-8
You Are Angry	Matthew 5:9,22

WHERE TO FIND

Ten Commandments	Exodus 20
Lord's Prayer	Matthew 6, Luke 11
Beatitudes	Matthew 5:1-12
Sermon on the Mount	Matthew 5,6,7
Golden Rule	Matthew 7:12
Great Commission	Matthew 28:19-20
Prodigal Son	Luke 15
Good Samaritan	Luke 10