

Today, we honor our Veterans who have served America



What Is A Veteran by Father Denis Edward O'Brien, USMC

Some veterans bear visible signs of their service: a missing limb, a jagged scar, a certain look in the eye. Others may carry the evidence inside them: a pin holding a bone together, a piece of shrapnel in the leg - or perhaps another sort of inner steel: the soul's ally forged in the refinery of adversity. Except in parades, however, the men and women who have kept America safe wear no badge or emblem. You can't tell a vet just by looking. What is a vet?

He is the cop on the beat who spent six months in Saudi Arabia sweating two gallons a day making sure the armored personnel carriers didn't run out of fuel. He is the barroom loudmouth, dumber than five wooden planks, whose overgrown frat-boy behavior is outweighed a hundred times in the cosmic scales by four hours of exquisite bravery near the 38th parallel.

She - or he - is the nurse who fought against futility and went to sleep sobbing every night for two solid years in Da Nang. He is the POW who went away one person and came back another - or didn't come back AT ALL. He is the Quantico drill instructor who has never seen combat - but has saved countless lives by turning slouchy, no-account rednecks and gang members into Marines, and teaching them to watch each other's backs.

He is the parade - riding Legionnaire who pins on his ribbons and medals with a prosthetic hand. He is the career quartermaster who watches the ribbons and medals pass him by. He is the three anonymous heroes in The Tomb Of The Unknowns, whose presence at the Arlington National Cemetery must forever preserve the memory of all the anonymous heroes whose valor dies unrecognized with them on the battlefield or in the ocean's sunless deep.

He is the old guy bagging groceries at the supermarket - palsied now and aggravatingly slow - who helped liberate a Nazi death camp and who wishes all day long that his wife were still alive to hold him when the nightmares come. He is an ordinary and yet an extraordinary human being - a person who offered some of his life's most vital years in the service of his country, and who sacrificed his ambitions so others would not have to sacrifice theirs.

He is a soldier and a savior and a sword against the darkness, and he is nothing more than the finest, greatest testimony on behalf of the finest, the greatest nation ever known.

So remember, each time you see someone who has served our country, just lean over and say Thank You. That's all most people need, and in most cases it will mean more than any medals they could have been awarded or were awarded.

Two little words that mean a lot, "THANK YOU."

Lord and Holy Protector, you called Abraham and Sarah to leave their homeland and to journey away from their own people. Yet you kept them safe wherever they went. Protect our children, our husbands and wives, our mothers and fathers, and our friends and loved ones who now must leave to fight in this war. Walk by their side and calm any fear. Be their companion and guide their thoughts; encircle them with your light, and keep them from harm; and when their service is ended, lead them safely home again. God of all goodness, look with love on those who wait for the safe return of their loved ones who serve in the armed forces of their country. In faith and hope, we turn to you for comfort. Grant that we may trust in your mercy and send an angel to sustain us as we await their safe return. For you, O God, are our shelter in every storm and our refuge in times of danger.

We pray for U.S. soldiers who are returning home and have served in prior wars. We are grateful for their service and commitment. **Be with them, Lord.**

We pray for mothers, fathers, wives, husbands, daughters, and sons who mourn the death of a U.S. soldier they love.
Be with them, Lord.

We pray for the soldiers who are still in Iraq and Afghanistan. Protect them and keep them safe.
Be with them, Lord.

We pray for our policymakers and leaders who hold the futures of hundreds of thousands of American lives in their hands. Give them wisdom, integrity, and strength as they make important decisions. **Be with them, Lord.**

Lord God, we will keep in our minds and our hearts our sisters and brothers across the world, who are serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, veterans of past wars and those who return home carrying the wounds of war. Stand with them in their hours of uncertainty and in their readjustment to life at home. Guide and protect them with your love. As we commit ourselves to prayer to assure peace in our time we ask you to bless all who serve America. We ask this through Christ Our Lord, Amen.



Honoring their Service to America
Thank a Veteran for the Freedoms you enjoy today!

Ask not what your country can do for you...but what you can do for your country.

John F. Kennedy



This nation will remain the land of the free, only so long as it is the home of the brave.

Elmer Davis

| Service Members | Period of Service | Branch of Service/Service Note |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Archbishop Edwin. O'Brien | Vietnam | US Army Chaplain & Archbishop of the Military |
| Most Rev. William D. Borders | World War II | US Army Chaplain Awarded the Bronze Star for Valor |
| From The Bochenek Family | | |
| Bochenek, Stanley | World War II | US Army - Uncle |
| Bochenek, Joseph | World War II | Army Air Corp Fr. Joe's Father |
| Bochenek, Leo | World War II | US Army - Uncle |
| Bochenek, Daniel | World War II | US Army - Uncle |
| Bochenek, Raymond | | US Marine Corps - Uncle |
| Bochenek, Raymond | | US Army - Brother |
| From the Batterstby Family | | |
| Battersby, Henry | Vietnam | US Air Force |
| Schroeder, Sr., Henry J. | World War II | US Army |
| Schroeder, Jr., Henry J. | Vietnam | US Army |
| Cavey, Theresa | Vietnam | US Army (Womans Army Corp) |
| From the Armitage Family | | |
| Fajkowski, Joseph J. | World War II | US Army |
| From the Freburger Family | | |
| Freburger, Thomas | Vietnam | US Army |
| The Kaczmarek Family | | |
| Kaczmarek, Gerard | Korea | US Air Force |

| Service Members | Period of Service | Branch of Service/Service Note |
|---|---|--------------------------------|
| From the Luckhardt Family | | |
| Luckhardt, V. | World War II | |
| Lukhardt, K. | World War II | |
| Dressel, J. | World War II | |
| Benklrt, W. | World War II | |
| Burkey, H. | World War II | |
| Pucklis, L. | World War II | |
| Spillman, R | Firefighter | |
| Janitzky, S. | Police Officer | |
| From the Rostikowski Family | | |
| Rostkowski, Sr., Paul | World War II | US Army |
| From the Thompson Family | | |
| Thompson, Clifford | World War II (<i>POW</i>) | US Army |
| Rodgers, Henry | World War II (<i>KIA - Salerno, Italy</i>) | US Army |
| Hanlin, Thomas | World War II | US Army Air Corp |
| From the Shorb Family | | |
| Shorb, William P | World War II | US Army |
| Muth, Jr., John C. | Korea | US Army |
| Mouring, Geroge C. | Vietnam | US Air Force |
| From the Raatjes Family | | |
| Raatjes, Mike | Vietnam | US Navy |
| Raatjes, Alice "Sam" (<i>McMann</i>) | Vietnam | US Air Force |
| McMann, Douglas | World War II, Korea & Vietnam | US Navy |
| Raatjes, Henry | World War II | US Navy Seabees |
| Raatjes, Kenn | Desert Storm | US Air National Guard |
| Raatjes, Sean, age 12 | Cadet Corp - current | USAF Civil Air Patrol |

Freedom is not Free!

We thank all who are currently or have in the past served America. It is a great privilege to salute and honor our grandfathers, grandmothers, fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles and others who selflessly gave of themselves in the name of the United States of America. God Bless our Veterans, God Bless the men and women serving on Active Duty around the world & God Bless America!

