



CHAPLAIN'S PRAYER

H A N D B O O K



FAITH-
MIGHTY FAITH-
THE PROMISE SEES
AND
RESTS ON THAT
ALONE-
LAUGHS AT
IMPOSSIBILITIES
AND SAYS IT
SHALL BE DONE

-Charles Wesley

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This book is dedicated to ALL
who endeavor to enhance
our organization through
becoming an
American Legion Chaplain



Benedictions

Our Heavenly Father; With heads bowed in tribute to our fallen comrades, we bring this meeting to a close. Let us not only remember the POW's and MIA's still unaccounted for but let us also remember our brave men and women now on peace-keeping missions throughout the world. We ask that you keep them safe. Before we part and go 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, and finally, Dear Father, in the silence of this moment, we dedicate our selves anew. For God and Country, Amen.

Rev. Robert 'Mac' McIntire

O Lord, on this day grant to the living grace and harmony, to the long departed everlasting rest, to us and all your servants, the promise of a light to guide us on our way. May the Lord bless us and make his face to shine upon us. May the Lord give us peace this day and forever, Amen.

Mac Quarric, Post 38 Chaplain

We thank you Lord for the opportunity to gather together this day to pay homage to those brave men and women who have gone before us. We ask your blessings on them so that they may rest in peace, Amen.

Author Unknown

Lord, as we depart to go our separate ways, we ask your blessing for our nation. Grant us strength and courage to carry on in service to You, our God, and to our country. Challenge us by our example to honor our veterans, both living and departed, each and every day. Be with our leaders in The American Legion, other veteran's organizations and to those that represent us in state and federal government. Bless our veterans who lie in sickness and poor health. Grant them comfort and knowledge that they are not forgotten. Bless the families of those whose loved ones are still listed as POW/MIA's. And, finally O Lord, in this moment of silence we dedicate ourselves anew for 'God and Country' In your name we pray, Amen.

Al Lietzow, Post 24, Past Department Chaplain

Heavenly Father, creator of us all, thank You for this day. It has been a blessing to experience our portion of all that is. Blessed be as we become even more aware of all that surrounds us and is ours for the asking. Guide us each moment that we may be truly aware of our actions, thought and intent. There is true peace in knowing our provider. Thank you, thank you and blessed be. Amen

Rev. Fred L Rich, Past Department Chaplain

May the Lord bless us and keep us. May the Lord make His face shine upon us and be gracious unto us. May the Lord lift up His countenance upon us and give us peace this day and forever, Amen.

Bob Sapp, Past Department Chaplain

May the strength of God sustain us
May the power of God preserve us
May the Hand of God protect us
May the Way of God direct us
May the love of God go with us this day and forever
Amen Bob Sapp, Past Department Chaplain

Dismiss us with your blessing, O Lord, as we leave this _____, keep us mindful of those things we have said and heard this meeting. Let us remember every day the many sacrifices of all our veterans. Bless and protect our land of America and keep us, as Legionnaires, always devoted to God and Country. Grant that we may ever be defended by your power. Amen
Howard Huettner, Post 58

Committal Prayers

Receive, O Father, the soul of our comrade _____ departed, and grant him an entrance into your heavenly kingdom where he may know the joy of everlasting life according to your promise. Amen
Bob Sapp, Past Department Chaplain

Unto Almighty God we commend the soul of our departed comrade _____ and we commit his/ her body to the ground (deep, elements or resting place). Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust. In steadfast faith that as he/she has borne the im-age of the earthy so he/she shall bear the image of the heavenly in your everlasting kingdom. Amen.

Bob Sapp, Past Department Chaplain

God, Father of us all, we consecrate our dearly departed loved one, _____, into your keeping. Let us remember him/her for all his/her actions and deeds with pride and love. Bless our departed comrade and keep him unto you. Please bless these family members and friends now in their great sorrow and need. Let them remember our comrade with reverence knowing he is in your care. Thank you Lord. Amen

William G. Weaver, Post 159

Dear family and friends, we are gathered here to bid a final farewell to the body of our dear _____ entrusting his/her body to the elements. We hereby commit his/her physical body to its final resting place with the knowledge that from the earthly house the spirit has a dwelling place with our divine creator. As you come into the world so be it as you go now and forever more. Amen

Rev. Fred. L. Rich, Past Department Chaplain

To follow one of the suggested
services in the
Officer's Manual

Almighty and Eternal God, our Heavenly Creator who has dominion over life and death, grant to us the grace to remember with love and reverence _____ our valiant and honored departed comrade. Grant peace and eternal rest to him and to all those other veterans who have gone before us and now lie here in quiet solitude. And Lord, make us ready for our final hour. We ask that You strengthen and console us who now sorrow and bestow on us Your everlasting blessing. We ask that You help each of us here to support each other and we ask that You make us an instrument of Your peace. Where there is hatred, let us 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. Grant that we may not seek so much 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 in dying that we are born to eternal life. And now, I invite all veterans here in this assembly to render a final salute to our departed fellow veteran.

I'm Free

Don't grieve for me, for now I'm free
I'm following the path God laid for me.
I took His hand when I heard Him call
I turned by back and left it all.

I could not stay another day
To laugh, to love, to work or play
Tasks left undone must stay that way,
I found that place at the close of the day.

If my parting has left a void,
Then fill it with remembered joy.
A friendship shared, a laugh, a kiss,
Ah yes, these things, I too will miss.

Be not burdened with times of sorrow,
I wish you the sunshine of tomorrow.
My life's been full, I savored much.
Good friends, good times, a loved one's touch.

Perhaps my time seemed all too brief,
Don't lengthen it now with undue grief.
Lift up your heart and share with me
God wanted me now, He set me free.

I Am

Do not stand by my grave and cry
I am not there, I do not die.
I am a thousand winds that blow.
I am the diamond glint of snow.
I am the sunlight on ripened grain.
I am the gentle autumn rain.
When you wake in the morning hush,
I am the swift, uplifting rush of
Circling birds in flight.
I am the soft starlight at night
Do not stand at my grave and cry
I am not there, I do not die.

In Loving Memory

Oh God, almighty and merciful, who brought us here as Navy Veterans who proudly served for the peace and freedoms that our great country stands for. We are here today to honor the memory of our departed comrades - Heroes All -they are not lost or forgotten. We trust their souls to eternal rest in the loving care of our Creator and Savior. Their memory shall ever live in the minds of all shipmates, relatives, friends and those who show pride in our country.

Oh Lord, send your blessing and love on our living comrades who are not with us today and watch over all shipmates who continue to sail on the USS Gunston Hall. Keep us ever mindful to sail straight to the Post of Heaven. God bless everyone here and God bless America.

George B. Leytem, Post 330

Safely Home

I am home in heaven, dear ones,
Oh, so happy and so bright
There is perfect joy and beauty
In this everlasting light.

All the pain and grief is over,
Every restless tossing passed.
I am now at peace forever,
Safely home in heaven at last.

Then you must not grieve so sorely,
For I love you dearly still.
Try to look beyond earth's shadows.
Pray to trust our Father's will.

There is work still waiting for you,
So you must not idly stand;
Do it now while life remains
You shall rest in God's land
When that work is all completed.
He will gently call you home.
Oh, the rapture of that meeting,
Oh, the joy to see you come

Fred Campaglive, Post 284

The Traveler

He has put on invisibility.

Dear Lord, I cannot see-

But this I know, although the road ascends,

And passes from my sight,

That there will be no night;

That You will take him gently by the hand

And lead him on

Along the road of life that never ends,

And will find it is not death but dawn.

I do not doubt that You are there as here,

And You will hold him dear.

Our life did not begin with birth,

It is not of the earth;

And this that we call death, it is no more

Than the opening and closing of a door-

And in Your house how many rooms must be

Beyond this one where we rest momentarily.

Dear Lord, I thank You for the faith that frees,

The love that knows it cannot lose its own;

The love that looking through the shadows, sees

That You and he and I are ever one!

James Dillet Freeman

Mere Boys

As old soldiers should we just fade away?

Today we awoke to the sounds of birds...

not bombs

We awoke to the sound of children chattering...

not chattering machine guns

Today we stand looking back at a vanquished
enemy... not into his guns.

Peace.

A nation at peace... though not perfect...

a nation at peace!

Peace given to us by...

Mere Boys

Mere Boys we all were as we answered the call of our
country so blessed.

Mere Boys uncertain of manhood, but, so willing to face
the test

That cost us so dearly... and caused many a
mother to weep.

Mere Boys, they say

Yet, as mere boys we came from the farms, the plains, the
cities, the mountains and the coastal shores.

You saw us fall in New Guinea, Tarawa, Bataan, the steamy
jungles of Vietnam, the cold mountains of Korea and
the hot sands of Kuwait...

We fell from the skies and slipped beneath the turbulent
seas

Mere Boys?

Our boyhood was forever stripped away that day with the first desperate shot even though the price of a nation's freedom, our blood, we had to pay and pay and pay... still we marched away!

Now...

They call us mere old veterans.. Mere old men from an obscure past.

They pick out our wrongs and try to change our songs, that sent us marching away... so they can ignore the facts, that is was Mere Boys

Who paid the price.

So they can speak their own dialects or worship in their own way or see their children's eyes open this very day.

Yes, we are mere old veterans, who ask you all to not let this country at peace forget that indeed, among all those that sleep under the protective cover of hallowed sod from Normandy to Manila to Cho Chi to Tampa Bay,

Were mere Boys, that day.

Rev. Fred L Rich, Past Department Chaplain



Flag Folding

We fold from the stripes toward the stars, for whereas the stripes represent the thirteen original colonies, they are now embodied in the fifty sovereign states represented by the stars.

FIRST FOLD -A symbol of life

SECOND FOLD -A symbol of our belief in the eternal life

THIRD FOLD -Made in honor and remembrance of the veteran departing our ranks and who gave a portion of life for the defense of our country to attain peace throughout the world.

FOURTH FOLD -Represents our weaker nature; for as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace as well as in times of war for His divine guidance.

FIFTH FOLD -A tribute to our country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, "Our country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right; but she is still our country, right or wrong."

SIXTH FOLD -Stands for where our hearts lie. It is with our heart that we pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

SEVENTH FOLD -A tribute to our Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that we protect our country and our flag against all the enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundaries of our republic.

EIGHTH FOLD -A tribute to the one who entered into the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day, and to honor mother, for whom

it flies on Mother's Day.

NINTH FOLD -A tribute to womanhood. It has been through their faith, love, loyalty and devotion that the character of the men and women who have made the country great have been molded.

TENTH FOLD -A tribute to father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of our country since he or she was first born.

ELEVENTH FOLD -in the eyes of Hebrew citizens, represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon and glorifies, in their eyes, the god of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

TWELFTH FOLD -In the eyes of a Christian citizen, represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in their eyes, God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

When the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost, reminding us of our National motto, "In God We Trust."

Flag Prayer

Almighty Father of us all;

Humbly we ask Thy blessing upon this symbol of our land, our homes, our liberties and especially we beseech Thee to open our eyes that we may more fully enshrine within our hearts the heritage which is ours. The values of our liberties, the glory of the symbol before which we bow in reverence only less than which we kneel to Thee. Suffer us all to pledge anew in our hearts what we pledge with our lips, an undying devotion to the flag which stands for the America we love. Amen

Richard Kline, Chaplain Post 64



Flander's Field

In Flander's Field the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved, and were loved, and now we lie
In Flander's Field.

Take up our quarrel with the foe;
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch, be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders Field.

John Macrae (1872-1918)

Rest ye in peace, ye Flander's dead.
The fight that ye so bravely led
We've taken up and we will keep
True faith with you who lie asleep
With each a cross to mark his bed,
In Flander's Field

Fear not that ye have died for naught,
The torch ye threw to us we caught.
Ten million hands will hold it high,
And freedom's light shall never die.
We've learned the lesson that ye taught
In Flander's Field.

R.W.Lillard

Four Chaplains

Prayer

Gracious Lord, we ask your blessing upon this gathering. We join together as people of many faiths. We join together as people of different experiences and backgrounds. Yet, we have all come to this sanctuary to share in this time of worship. Catho-lics, Jews and Protestants – we come together in the house of the Lord to worship, to praise your name, to thank you for your constant presence in our lives. And, we come together to honor four men – men who had gone to war as chaplains – to be the human touch of your love and caring among troops called upon to risk their lives for their country. We honor four chaplains who know how to love their neighbors as themselves. WE are thankful for the lesson they give to the generations – a lesson of self-sacrifice; a lesson of true brotherhood. With thankfulness, we ask your blessing upon the souls of Clark Polin and Alexander Goode, of John Washington and George Fox. We pray also for the souls of the men who joined these chaplains in death that February day many years ago. More than 600 men saw the end of their hopes and dreams that icy morning in the effort to sustain the hopes and dreams of their families at home. May our hearts feel a special kinship today with those who were aboard the Dorchester when it was hit by a torpedo... and yet who live and remember the experience, and the loss. WE know they must recall the morning with sadness which has remained with them through the decades.

Prayer

Lord, we know the story we remember today is just one fine example of the many times men and women have sacrificed themselves for others. And, we know this story is one among many examples of true brotherhood. Yet, we single out and hold it before us as a reminder that all persons – of all faiths and colors and creeds – are capable of showing such courage and such compassion. Such has been true of so many who have served in all branches of service, in time of war and peace. Such has been true throughout the generations. Help us to see, even today, the times that we might stand up for that which is most important and to do so with more concern for others than for ourselves. Help us to recognize the times when we might overlook the insignificant differences between people, and respond to the needs of someone just because he or she is a person in need. Forgive us for those times in which we participate in the freedoms of our land, yet fail to honor the rights of all Americans. Help us to learn how to show justice in our lives, to love mercy in our relationship with others and to walk humbly with you at all times. Thank you, Lord, for watching over us and comforting us in grief. May we also feel your presence in the joy of celebrating your love – as it shines through the human spirit of the four chaplains we remember today; as it shines through all who truly love justice and peace. May all who are present at this service gain wisdom and compassion from worshipping together this day. Amen.

O Lord, We thank you for the great love shown by the Four Chaplains we remember and honor today. May their sacrifice become the inspiration we need as we go forward to the task of serving you and our country. May your will be done in all of our efforts. We pray in your holy name. Amen

Author Unknown

Invocations

Father of love, understanding and compassion, we bow in reverence to thank you for the many blessings you have bestowed upon us in our endeavor to work toward a better community, state and nation through The American Legion. We ask that you guide us, as leaders of the Post this evening, so that we may be productive in our discussions and votes toward our goal of service to thee, our members, community and nation. We know if we follow your direction we can do no wrong. We ask this of you for God and country. Amen

Carey A. Perrell, Post 155

Heavenly Father, Thank you Lord for this wonderful day. Be with us in all our walks of life. Let us be attentive to all who join in this ceremony. Let us remember all our service men and women who gave the ultimate sacrifice and also for those who are still suffering in hospitals, nursing homes and personal dwellings. Guide us how to help them, we ask this in Your name. Amen

Sydney J. Barber, Post 334

O Lord, It is with humble hearts that we come together this day to remember that event of _____ when the bravery and courage of those who were there that day became the bulwark of our defense against tyranny and aggression. For those of us here today who enjoy the freedoms they preserved for us. Help us to consecrate our lives to maintain the liberties they fought and died for. In Your name, O Lord, we pray. Amen.

Dick Ebersole, Post 273

Our Gracious Heavenly Father, You have created us, You know our hearts and have made known Your love for us and Your desire for our lives to be submitted to You. As we proceed the affairs of The American Legion we ask that you direct our minds, uplift our spirits and give us the assurance of Your presence in this gathering. Grant us awareness of Your will in our lives and the faithful execution of the affairs of The American Legion. Bless our time together and the business of this meeting. We ask these things in Your holy name. Amen.

Roger C. Perkins, Chaplain Post 25

Our Father, with hearts humble, with the sense of our responsibility, we give you thanks for all our comrades who have lain down their lives in the service of our country.
Amen

Mac Quarrie, Post 1388

Our Heavenly Father, we thank you for the opportunity to meet once again as members of The American Legion family. We pray for Your guidance during this meeting and may you guide our hearts and minds with your wisdom and love. Keep us alert to our opportunities and responsibilities as members of this great organization and make us deserving of the freedom handed down to our generation by those who sacrificed so much in the past and finally, Heavenly Father, May all that is said and done in this hour reflect credit upon us, our community, our organization and our nation. We ask this in Your holy name, dear Father. Amen

Reverend R. McIntire, Post 19

POW/MIA

Heavenly Father, The table is set in our Post home in memory of our brothers who answered the call of You, dear Lord, against the tyranny of mankind. We ask You send them understanding, love, hope and a realization that we of The American Legion have not forgotten them and continue to work for their accounting and return. Amen.

Fred Rich, Past Department Chaplain, Post 147

Heavenly Father, Creator of us all, we ask:

For our brothers forever missing – May they reside in your kingdom.

For our brother still held in captivity – May your light of truth guide them and keep them whole

For the families waiting for resolve – May they understand and find your inner peace.

These things we ask in your name. Amen

Fred L. Rich, Past Department Chaplain

Sailor's Prayer

Heavenly Father:

Bring on the pilot, cast off the line;
Wait for the flooding tide.
Haul up the anchor,
Lay off the shore,
Open the topsails wide.
Make fast the hatches, cargo secure,

Close up the wind to lea,
Slide from the harbor, let out the log,
Make for the open sea.

Hold tight the rigging, stand by the bridge,
Ride on the surging foam,
Until the vessel, voyage completed,
Turns again, bound for home.

I am the vessel, mine is that ship,
Buffeting through life's gales.
Hope is the steerage, faith is the hull,
Charity firms my sails.

When on the shoreline, God check my log,
Looks at my manifest;
Pray that his mercy grants me safe harbor,
Laying my sails to rest.
Thank you God.

Author Unknown

Sailor's Poem

The Sea of Life

Here upon Life's sea I flounder,
Besieged by day and night
Yet none to save me from this straight,
Unless it be God's might.

So his good helmsman guides me through
Those hidden treacherous shoals
This good captain of my life's ship
The savior of men's souls.

And when the winds and tempest rage,
And it seems my ship will sink
His mighty hand doth quell the sea
And save me from the brink.

Even tho I'm helpless,
With broken mast and tattered sail
The breath of God will see me through,
His word will never fail.

Thus with God's love I'm tended,
All through the darkest night
Until I'm safely in his port
And anchored in his sight.

Stephen R. Johns

Seriously Ill Veterans

Prayer

We come to You this day, O Lord, to ask Your blessings and healing graces for _____ Your faithful servant. Let him/her continue to grow day by day with new strength and a greater awareness that You are with him/her throughout this difficult and painful period of his/her life. Lord, we ask that You restore to health this seriously ill comrade and veteran so that they may continue to serve You and provide testimony to Your love and healing powers. Amen

Dick Ebersole, Post 273

Prayer

Heavenly Father: We thank You for Your lovely daughter/son _____. We thank You Father for seeing _____ healthy and whole as she/he was originally created. We thank You for the message of showing that we love and care for Your daughter/ son as we would love our own. We thank You Father for the love, support and continued prayers of thanksgiving. We thank You Father for all things and the lessons they bring. For we know that it is Your will and promise that we are created in Your image, whole and perfect. Thank You God for all these things and more. We know that your loving light shines upon us all today and forever; For in that light there is no fear, only love and remembrance of Your word. Amen.

Author Unknown

Table Graces

O Lord, creator of all mankind, bless us and the food we are about to use and keep us ever mindful of the needs of others. Also, grant that we may feast in paradise with Thee. Amen.

Mac Quarrie, Post 138

Bless you, O Lord God, King of the universe. You bring forth food from the earth and sustain all your creatures with goodness, mercy and grace. Blessed are You who give food to all. Amen (Jewish)

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)

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. (Methodist)

O Great Spirit, we humble beings give thanks and praise to you our father for the greatness of your land to feed your people. Amen. (Native American)

Dear Heavenly Father, we thank you for the bounty we are about to receive. May it nourish our bodies the way Your love nourishes our souls and we ask a special blessing on the loving hands that prepared it. We ask this in your holy name. Amen

Rev. Robert "Mac" McIntire, Post 19

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul, He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil for Thou art with me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies, Thou anointest my head with oil, my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be they name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen

Prayer of Protection

The light of God surrounds us;
The love of God enfolds us;
The power of God protects us;
The presence of God watches over us;
Wherever we are, God is, and all is well. Amen.

Washington's Prayer for
the United States of America

We make our earnest prayer that Thou will keep the United States in Thy holy protection. That Thou will incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government, and entertain a brotherly affection in love for one another and for their fellow citizens of the United States at large. And, finally, that Thou will most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy and demean ourselves with that charity, humility and pacific temper of mind which were the characteristics of the divine author of our blessed religion, without a humble imitation of whose example in these things we can never hope to be a happy nation. Grant our supplication, we beseech Thee, through our Lord. Amen.



Inspiration for Chaplains

Almighty Lord of all the earth, look down on us as we ask and pray and thank You each in our own way. Give us strength to honor You. Let our knowledge of You be our guide to living and dying with the faith, hope and love You have bestowed upon us. As chaplains, teach us to be tolerant and understanding of each other, knowing that we can not get to the kingdom of heaven on the same highway. Bless our families and communities with the faith and understanding we all need to continue on the road of life until we return to Your home. Guide us through this day and all days that You grant us to do your work. Amen.

Betty Brooks, Post 4

My Hill to Climb

This hill is mine alone to climb
Where I fail or brightly shine
And I can only my best try.

Each fateful step will lead the way
To sweet success or dark dismay,
So heaven help me in my quest
To bring out my very best at
Being a Legionnaire's Chaplain today.

Catherine Janssen Irwin

Galatians 6:9

Let us not grow tired of doing good, for in due time we shall reap our harvest if we do not give up.

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who contributed to this work.



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