

- Today, of course, as we celebrate the Mass for the Dead, on this Memorial Day we especially commemorate especially those who have died in the service of our nation.
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- We can argue politics and motivations of politicians and things like that—especially when it comes to war—but those things are not in the purview of the soldier, sailor, airman or Marine. He or she has simply sworn to obey our nation’s legitimately elected leaders—to defend the nation against all enemies, foreign and domestic—a duty to which our armed forces have held true these 240 years.
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- I saw a post recently from a young lady on Facebook:
- *“Waking up next to my husband and baby girl on this beautiful morning would not be possible without the thousands of brave men and women who have served this country, and fought for our freedom and safety. Thank you for being real heroes.”*
- How true...particularly for those who never came home...who charged boldly into the fray and left behind mother, father... brothers and sisters...wife, son and daughter...trusting in the ideals upon which our nation is founded, and for the protection of her people and their freedom.
- So, as we honor those who gave their lives to protect those precious freedoms of ours, we remember the tremendous loss each death brings.
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- In Lexington, Gettysburg, or on the shores of Tripoli...in the trenches of the western front, the sands of Iwo Jima, Normandy beach...Pearl Harbor, Guadalcanal, Okinawa...Inchon, or along some nameless trail in Vietnam...in Iraq or Afghanistan...in khaki,

green, or camouflage...blue or gray...we honor, remember and pray for the souls of these who had the courage and the daring to put themselves in harm's way for the ideals in which they believed...and for those freedoms which we so often take for granted.

- So today... let us remember them, and their families who suffered—and still suffer daily—at the longing for children and grandchildren unrealized ...for smiles unseen...for embraces forever lost...and yet trusting in those words of Christ: *Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.*
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- And let us cherish those who serve honorably today—in the mountains of Afghanistan, the forests of Europe, miles above the earth or beneath the stormy seas...wherever they are called to serve.
- All have pledged their lives to stand upon the wall...to protect our nation and her people...standing resolutely their posts in rain and sun...whether in offices, or in foxholes, or on patrol in the desert.
- Let us remember the debt owed to those who mount the ramparts daily to protect us, our freedoms and our nation...and especially the debt owed to those we remember today: those who have not, and will not, return.
- No greater thanks can we do for them than to asks God's mercy for their souls in our prayer...and no greater honor can we give them than to remember them before Almighty God...for they stand in certain respect as very examples of Christian charity...for *“Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”* (John 15:13)