

## Memorial Day Prayers

*The following prayers were used in observance of Memorial Day. I offer them to stimulate your imagination and spirit as you prepare for this important remembrance.*

### Memorial Prayer 1

CAPT T. Randy Cash, CHC, USN, Retired  
Past National Chaplain of the American Legion

For all of your blessings of the past, O Lord, we give you honest and humble thanks. For our homeland, with its torch of liberty shining bright welcome to exiles and refugees of oppression and persecution throughout the world, we praise you. Through your providence, O Lord, you have given our nation a position of high responsibility among the nations of the world and we entreat you for strength to shoulder the burdens of duty which you have placed upon us.

For the tenacity, courage, strength, and skill of fighting men and women who on wild seas and hostile beaches, in steaming jungles and mud filled valleys, on icy mountains and in rubble-strewn cities, suffered and died for all the families of our land, we give you praise, O Lord, and in their memory dedicate ourselves anew to you, and our country. This we pray, Amen.

### Memorial Prayer 2

CAPT T. Randy Cash, CHC, USN, Retired  
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Eternal Father, who alone rules the destinies of nations and who has deemed that men should live in freedom and not fear, awaken in us a new appreciation of our land that we may apply ourselves to the great work of keeping alive a sense of freedom. Grant us your spirit as we honor those who have 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 remember the sufferings, the fears and the horrors of what they endured.

It is a time for us to realize that much of our best blood has been spilled—all over the world—so that we might live free and unchained! May they, and those who suffer wounds for peace, as well as their families who valiantly and silently also serve, receive rest from their struggles and a "well done" from you, Captain of their souls. Permit us never to forget our comrades-in-arms from whose fallen hands we have taken up the sacred cause of freedom. Today, we consecrate unto you the debt of our national gratitude which is their rightful due. Keep sacred their sacrifice 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 hearth and home, the peace of our nation, and the tranquility of the world. We earnestly implore your providential care as we face the grim and great task which lies ahead. May the day soon come when we can lay down arms and more earnestly give our attention to do justice, to live in kindness, and to walk humbly in your sight. Amen.

Memorial Prayer 3

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Two centuries ago Benjamin Franklin challenged a fledgling nation with these words:" Let us ever remember that our interests are in concord and not in conflict, and that our true greatness rests in our victories of peace rather than those of war."

It is in the spirit of that challenge, that we offer this prayer: "Almighty God, we stand here today to pay tribute to brave men and women who gave their all in service to our country. Accept our thanksgiving for their sacrifice and that of their families, which have purchased for us a free land. Cause us 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, grant thy peace, until men everywhere 'shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks . . . and learn of war no more'." Amen.

Memorial Prayer 4

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May the Lord our God bless us all present here, to memorialize those who 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 richness.

May our memory of them be an honorable one, full of thanksgiving to the Lord who accepted them into His kingdom.

The Lord is for all, and in Him we believe, and to Him we pray remember all who died in the service of their country, whether in the air, or on land or in the sea.

O Lord, be gracious and merciful unto them, and let Your light shine upon them, for You are our God, and unto you we ascribe glory now and forever. Amen.

Memorial Prayer 5

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Almighty God, our heavenly Father, in whose hands are the living and the dead; we give you thanks for all those of your servants who have laid down their lives in the service of our country. Grant to them your mercy and the light of your presence, and the assurance of your peace. Amen.

Memorial Prayer 6

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O God, our Heavenly Father, you who would not willingly bring suffering to humanity, your creation; you have brought us to this place today  
-- That our sensibilities might be shaken;  
-- That we might weigh the peace of this garden setting against the pain and terror which brought thousands who died in wars to rest here and in countless other gardens.  
The contrasts are so stark that we would like not to see, much less experience them.

But, it is for us the living to bear remembrance. To remember first, Father, then rejoice, that it was not we who sacrificed self before the enemies of each age of war, but some other son, daughter, brother, father. Few are the names we know on the gravestones, but they read not with our names imprinted and we are glad.

And then to remember, Father, that those who sacrificed could well have been us. That all too soon the gifts of war--the torn body, the early grave--could have been ours; a price that we would have paid, were it not but for fate. WE WERE WILLING, not cowards or heroes, BUT WILLING.

And finally, to remember that time underscores the futility of wars

-- That foes become friends

-- That friends become foes

Until the confusion of friend and foe makes us wonder at it all—and recognize the mindlessness of warring.

Dear God, help us to remember the significance of a "Memorial Day" and pray indeed for the implements of war to be forged anew into the plowshares and pruning hooks of our great-grandchildren. This is our prayer that we offer in your Holy Name, in memory of those of the past and in the hope for a future of peace, O God our Father. Amen.

Memorial Prayer 6  
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O Lord, grant us freedom with discipline, motivation with understanding, and determination with compassion.

O Lord, give us the will for self-preservation, and the strength and power to help those who are willing to help themselves.

O Lord, give us insight and patience, wisdom along with a sense of duty, and ability coupled with restraint to adjust to the changes in nature and men.

O Lord, show us your ways, and never deliver us into the hands of any enemy.

Bless us with your heavenly and earthly bounties, and never let us be in want.

Guide us 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, let us be ever grateful, and accept the responsibilities which they entail. You are our God, and to you we would ascribe glory and honor, now and forever. Amen.