

## Catholic Cemetery Conference Memorial Day Program

# “Serving God and Country: A Memorial Day Salute to Our Heroes”

## Catholic Cemeteries Nationwide Celebrate Memorial Day

### “Serving God and Country: a Memorial Day Salute”

As the country prepares to celebrate Memorial Day, thousands of Catholic cemeteries across the United States will participate in a national celebration, “*Serving God and Country: A Memorial Day Salute to Our Heroes*.” This national program, developed by the Catholic Cemetery Conference, will honor those men and women who died while serving in the armed forces, as well as recognize both our active military and military veterans who have served our country.

“*Serving God and Country: A Memorial Day Salute to Our Heroes*,” will invite our active military and veterans to participate in Memorial Day Mass at Catholic cemeteries across the United States, as well as to join in a host of other cemetery-related activities throughout the weekend. “We invite Catholic cemeteries from across this nation to participate in the program, to honor those members of the military who died in combat, and to recognize our veterans and current servicemen and women,” said Stephen E. Bittner, CCCE, CCE, President of the Catholic Cemetery Conference.

Veterans and active military are invited to serve as flag or candle bearers during the opening and closing processions at Mass, and will also be invited to serve as Lectors, participate in the Presentation of Gifts, and recite uniform intercessions followed by a moment of silence.

Many Catholic cemeteries are also planning additional activities, including Wreath Laying Ceremonies, Tribute Boards (like the one shown on page 11) and Military Choirs, with military members invited to participate. The Catholic War Veterans of America and the Knights of Columbus are also expected to participate in the national celebration.

The Catholic Cemetery Conference Board of Directors feels it is important to remember the sacrifices of those who have died, those who have served, and those who currently serve our country in the armed forces. The CCC Board of Directors is proud and honored to be part of a national program that acknowledges the commitment each soldier has made to our Country as part of a long, inspiring history of self-giving, service, and the risk of the ultimate sacrifice.”

**MEMORIAL DAY:** *Each year, our nation pauses to remember the brave men and women, who made the ultimate sacrifice of giving their life in the service of our nation. Memorial Day is much more than the start of summer or the beginning of outdoor activity. The original reason for Memorial Day, is to honor our fallen heroes, who died in the military, by engaging in a public activity, that honors them and by decorating their graves. This Memorial Day, Catholic cemeteries all across our country, will recognize the sacrifice made by those who died, defending our freedoms. I invite you as Cemeterians, to arrange for a Mass on Memorial Day if possible and to invite people to come and pray and visit the graves of those brave women and men in our Catholic cemeteries. Also find an opportunity to extend an invitation to veterans groups to come and honor our fallen heroes. Catholic cemeteries are places of hope and remembrance, because Jesus Christ said, “I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?” Our bodies will rise in the resurrection of the just at the end of time. May this Memorial Day lead us into sincere public expressions of gratitude and prayerful remembrance of our nation’s heroes.*

— Most Rev. John M. Quinn, D.D., Bishop of Winona