

IN NOMINE JESU

THE DEAD HEAR THE VOICE OF JESUS AND LIVE!

Our homily for this Veteran's Day Memorial Service is taken from our inspired readings. Hear the Word of the Lord:

Truly, truly, I say to all of you that (an) hour comes, and now is, when the dead will hear the Voice of the Son of God and the ones having heard will live (John 5:25).

Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ

The "Great War," now known as World War I, the "war to end all wars," officially ended with the Treaty of Versailles in 1919. Though the last big guns had been silenced on November 11, 1918, they did not remain quiet for long. Before that generation of servicemembers had entered the eternal roles of those who await the Last Day, wars and rumors of war continued across the globe. A sad and bitter reality is that, since the fall of the first man into sin, war has been part of human existence. Against those tragic facts sounds forth these words of God:

Truly, truly, I say to all of you that (an) hour comes, and now is, when the dead will hear the Voice of the Son of God and the ones having heard will live (John 5:25).

The hour has come when the dead have begun to hear the Voice of God. You have heard Him speak today, through all the readings in your service folder. The One Who actually fought the War to end all war, the Son of Man, has won. He did so by perfectly displaying the truth that your bulletin cover displays. He, the Messiah, took on humankind's three greatest enemies – sin (all breaking of God's Holy Word), death (which all people must face), and hell (designed to punish the fallen angels, but earned by people who continue to reject the Voice of God in Christ Jesus).

If you have been one of those who have heard and turned from the Voice of God, know that He still comes to serve you. He is here, even now, with His gifts of forgiveness for your sins; blessed life eternal now – for He took the sting of death into Himself; and heaven, whose gates He opened for you! God knows what genuine service is, for He is a Veteran of the greatest conflict that will ever take place.

Jesus truly, perfectly exemplified the core values which our United States Armed Forces still publish. He was the most honorable Person to ever be conceived, born and live. Every Word He declared has become, is becoming, or will become fulfilled. That shows His perfect integrity. We have been given recorded multiple eye-witness testimonies, which are in full agreement with all they declare, that He did, and does that which He says He will do. He showed uncontestable loyalty to God's command that He bear our sins into death and the grave. He exemplified Service before Self. He, who deserved not one punishment – for He was completely guiltless – bore all the blows and curses we all deserve for not being absolutely perfect in our thoughts, words and conduct before God and our fellow humans.

Everything He did as true Man displayed excellence before God and man. Yes, that Veteran of the Greatest War, He Who died, and was raised from the dead that you may live, is the One Man who resolutely, completely, without error fulfilled today's Army Core Values: *Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, Personal Courage*. Jesus, the Messiah, is the embodiment of the Air Force Core Values: *Integrity, Service Before Self, Excellence in All We Do*. The Son of Man, Jesus, is the shining fulfilled example of the Navy and Marine Corps Core Values: *Honor, Courage, Commitment*. It is

that Man, the One Who brought forth the promises contained in the Good News in our Psalm and Isaiah texts for today, Who still declares:

Truly, truly, I say to all of you, "The one continually hearing my Word and continually believing [upon] the One sending Me has life eternal and comes not into judgment, but has moved [his] living quarters from the death into the life." (John 5:24).

Those of us who have served, or accompanied those who serve, are likely aware of the acronym, *PCS (Permanent Change of Station)*. It is used to describe moving one's household and all belongings to a new duty station. The term *PCS* is used to distinguish a move from *TDY (Temporary Duty)*. For those in the military, *TDY* can mean time away from family and home, friends and normal daily routine. Almost all American Armed Forces Veterans' first experience with *TDY* comes with the easiest training – which at the time – can seem more trying than anything else we have done to that point in life. That first *TDY* goes by a few names, depending upon one's branch of service: boot camp, basic training, initial entry training, and so on. From completion of that fun, we are sent then to our schooling, again, usually *TDY* (except for some specialites, like, *aviators, language specialists, and so on*).

Then, when all the basics are learned, we are given *PCS* orders. One's *Permanent Change of Station* allows one a chance to put down roots, even if additional *TDY* orders come through. In the time since 9-11-01 until last year, many soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines have gotten exciting orders as soon as they hit their *Permanent Change of Station*. They were shipped off on *Temporary Duty* to exotic places – where people still live in mud huts, in caves, in tents, amidst sand and cold and deprivation, wherein rockets, mortars, bullets and *IEDs* greeted them. There, some of us got to live the concept of service in ways we pray you never ever have to – to hold a

wounded comrade as the medics come; to bear a dying servicemember away from the fight that no man be left behind; to stand at attention and render our last respects for those who have given all in service to their comrades in arms.

Whether one gets such an adrenaline rush *TDY*, or stays at his or her permanent duty station to support those “down range,” all in the military serve according to the Core Values of their Service Branch. Such people we call “Veterans.” Our nation, by the order of President Woodrow Wilson, honors them each year. Since 1919, that has taken place on the eleventh of November. They are we who have experienced *TDY* and *PCS*, no matter how many times, who awaited the time when our commitment to the core values of our Service is honored with phrases such as, “I fulfilled my enlistment,” “I was honorably discharged,” “I am a military retiree.”

In a real way, the same is true for those who have fought the good fight of the Faith. We, when our time of *Temporary Duty* in this fallen world is done, look forward to the *Permanent Change of Station* that endures. That one comes, not with orders that indicate we have fulfilled our service obligations. That *PCS* comes with the command that declares that our Commander in Chief has done all that is necessary for us to dwell in blessedness forever. In a manner that is weakly exemplified by the reception of retirement orders for a servicemember whose time of duty has come to an end, we who are Veterans of the greatest war, Won on the Cross by Jesus, have our “papers” in hand (the Holy Scriptures).

We have the Word of Promise, sealed in the death of Jesus, that, when our last hour comes, we will be raised to everlasting life. The most honorable Man to live, the most courageous Man to die, the most committed Man to live again has given us His Word. His is the contract sealed in blood, the one

which opens the gates of heavens for us, for you. He still says that which is true this day and always:

Do not, all of you, continue to wonder at this, because the hour comes in which all the ones in the tombs will hear the Voice of Him....(John 5:28)

He served that you may receive the blessed *PCS*. He did the *TDY* in the war against the devil, the world, and yes, even your sinful nature. He won that war, and gives you His strength to soldier on. He grants you the status of Honorably Discharged Veteran in that fight on account of all He does for you. He has given you a written contract that your final *Permanent Change of Station* is prepared. As you remain in His Word, He has recorded your name in the roles of those who live forever, honored by God in His death and resurrection!

The peace which passes all understanding guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus

National Veterans' Day

Psalm 34:1-9; Isaiah 35:3-10; II Peter 3:8-14; John 5:24-29

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Pastor Michael A. Morehouse

Soli Deo Gloria

