

**The Ascension of the Lord into Heaven is celebrated this weekend.** Jesus promised to send us the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, who will lead us into all Truth after His Ascension to the right hand of the Father. God never leaves us orphans. God is always with us as He promised until the end of time. During the ever-changing world that we are living in, it is good to be reminded that God is present, and He is in control.

**Monday we will also celebrate Memorial Day.** Here is a little reflection for you:

Memorial Day grew out of the human need to remember where we have been. Only then can we figure out where we are going. The cherished memories of a nation, a town, a church, or a family provide the values and dream that one generation passes on to the next. Forgetting means dropping the torch. We have much to remember!

All of this was on the mind of President Abraham Lincoln on November 19, 1863 as he made his way to the Pennsylvania battlefield. He feared that he might be the last president of the United States. The country teetered on the brink of self-destruction. The ceremony that afternoon would dedicate the site of the cemetery for the over forty thousand soldiers killed at Gettysburg in the three-day battle the previous July. Lincoln's remarks provided the seedbed for what would become Memorial Day.

“Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal,” he began. Less than two minutes later, he concluded, “The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here (referring to the sacrifice of the soldiers). It is for us the living rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us--that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion--that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain, that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people shall not perish from the earth.”

Over the next few years, many communities set aside special days to honor the fallen soldiers of the Civil War. Some services were held with little fanfare. Others involved marching bands and speeches. All included decorating soldier's graves with flowers and flags. Most towns referred to the event as Decoration Day. After World War I, the day expanded to honor the American heroes of all wars. Gradually the custom of decorating the graves of relatives and friends became a part of the day. Eventually the official name was changed to Memorial Day. Originally, the day always fell on May 30. In 1971, congress moved the date to the last Monday in May.

**Why Memorial Day? Because we don't want to forget.** But we know we do. Memorial Day is one generation's attempt to help the next generation to remember the lives, the legacies, and the lessons of those upon whose shoulders we stand. We want to remember men and women who paid for our freedom with their blood. We have much to remember.

We need to remember that freedom is never free.

**Pentecost Sunday is May 31st!** The Holy Spirit is the promised Advocate to guide us into all truth. There is a Novena to the Holy Spirit that begins today, the Friday of the 6th Week of Easter, I encourage you to go to the link below and to pray this Novena.

<http://www.catholictradition.org/Tradition/holy-spirit.htm>

Be assured of my prayers for all of you.

Don't lose hope, keep the faith, trust in God. Jesus, I Trust in You! Please keep praying the rosary.

In Christ,

Fr. Dan