

From Fr. Fleming's Desk



Some call Memorial Day the "opening" of the summer season - a notion not at all related to Memorial Day's origins and meaning. Millions will mark the day with time off and a cookout but fail to pause to honor those who gave their lives in service of their nation.

Here's a prayer I wrote some years back for Concord's Memorial Day Exercises. If you come this year (Monday, May 28 at 11:00 a.m., in front of the Town House in Monument Square) you'll hear this prayer again. If you won't be in town, bring this prayer to the cookout your attending and invite others to pause for a moment in the true spirit of the day.

Memorial Day Prayer

In the quiet sanctuaries of our own hearts,
let each of us name and call on the One whose power over us
is great and gentle, firm and forgiving, holy and healing...

You who created us, who sustain us, who call us to live in peace,
hear our prayer today.

Hear our prayer for all who have died,
whose hearts and hopes are known to you alone...

Hear our prayer for those who put the welfare of others ahead of their own:
give us hearts as generous as theirs...

Hear our prayer for those who gave their lives in the service of others,
and accept the gift of their sacrifice...

Help us to shape and make a world where we will lay down the arms of war
and turn our swords into ploughshares for a harvest of justice and peace...

Comfort those who grieve the loss of their loved ones
and let your healing be the hope in our hearts...

Hear our prayer today and in your mercy answer us
in the name of all that is holy.

Amen.