

November 10, 2017

“Veterans Day 2017”

Saturday is Veterans Day 2017. As I think over my ministry I wish I knew how many soldiers of our Armed Forces I have buried who served our country with distinction. Someone once told me that war was an undertaking that revealed a person’s truest self. So, this weekend we stop and pray for both the memories of our war dead as well as for peace. Perhaps the psalmist puts it for us best:

“I am for peace/but when I speak/they are for war” (Psalm 120:7, NRSV).

Tom Brokaw called these folks in his 1998 colossal best seller of the same name “The Greatest Generation.” People in this greatest generation generally had one job their whole life and they did things that no one else wanted to do, but they did them anyway—with a quiet resolve. These folks had an almost fanatical loyalty to their family, to their church, and to their country.

They were ones who understood the phrase from national newspaper masthead (Chicago Sun [Times]) that proclaimed, “My country—right or wrong!” Perhaps we all now know too much to subscribe to this philosophy, but you have to admit, this kind of blind loyalty to family, church, and country made their generation great. They did so much for so long, that we often forget how wonderful our country and communities are today thanks to them. Tom Hanks, who starred in “Saving Private Ryan,” gives us a good likeness of the values and loyalties that the members of this greatest generation possessed.

I want to suggest that if we want to be part of a next great generation, then we mark well the life of the last great generation. Their lives were a blueprint for faith, hope, and love. And this week of November 2010 is a time for all of us to pause—and to remember.

Come—Worship; Stay—Learn; Go—Serve