

## FROM THE PASTOR

Dear Brothers and Sisters



Did you find a flag on your front lawn this weekend? Memorial Day (originally known as Decoration Day) is a federal holiday in the United States for mourning the U.S. military personnel who have died while serving in the United States armed forces.

It is observed on last Monday of May although it was formerly observed on May 30 from 1868 to 1970.

Many people visit cemeteries and memorials on Memorial Day to honor and mourn those who died while serving in the U.S. military.

Here in Woodcliff Lake, we are invited to participate in the ceremony that will take place at the Woodcliff Lake VFW Memorial on Broadway at 9:00 am on Memorial Day.

Many volunteers place an American flag on graves of military personnel in national cemeteries, others took the trouble to place them on your lawn. Memorial Day is also considered the unofficial beginning of summer in the United States.

According to the United States Library of Congress website, "Southern women decorated the graves of soldiers even before the Civil War's end. Records show that by 1865, Mississippi, Virginia, and South Carolina all had precedents for Memorial Day." The earliest Southern Memorial Day celebrations were simple, somber occasions for veterans and their families to honor the dead and tend to local cemeteries. In following years, the Ladies Memorial Association and other groups increasingly focused rituals on preserving Confederate Culture and the Lost Cause of the Confederacy narrative.

The remembrance of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for us is right and fitting. The freedoms we enjoy, the daily life that we take for granted, we're paid for at a great cost. Memorial Day is an opportunity to be grateful for the life we have and the country we live in.

Let us join in giving thanks to the men and women who laid down their lives for us. Perhaps some of them were known to us personally, most of them were not. In the deserts, in the jungles, on the beaches, in the air, at sea...they made the greatest of all sacrifices for us, we who were unknown to them. Let us be grateful, let us not take this for granted. Let us remember them, let us raise a prayer of thanksgiving to and for them.

Fr. Sean