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*****DORMITION FAST*****

ON THE MEND: Please keep the following parishioners and others in your prayers for recovery from their illnesses and injuries: Archbishop Daniel, Metropolitan Antony, Metropolitan Yuriy, Metropolitan Theodosius [OCA], Archbishop Jovan, Bishop Robert, Metropolitan Savas, Father George & Pani Lillian Hnatko, Father Jakiw Norton, Father Paul Stoll, Father Igor Soroka, Father Joseph Kopchak, Father Elias Warnke, Father George Yatsko, Father Paul Bigelow, Father Emilian Balan, Father John & Pani Mary Anne Nakonachny, Father Steve Repa, Protopresbyter William Diakiw, Archpriest Dionysi Vitali, Protodeacon Joseph Hotrovich, Father Adam Yonitch, Pani-Dobrodijka Sonia Diakiw, Father Paisius McGrath, Father Michael Smolynec, Father Lawrence & Matushka Sophia Daniels, Father Joe Cervo, Father John Harrold [Saint Sylvester], Father George Livanos, Igumen Patrick, Pani Mary Ann Chubenko, Father Jim Orr, Father Rick Seilier, Panimatka Laryssa Charest, Joshua Agosto and his family, Eva Malesnick, Nick Behun, Grace Holupka, Joseph Sliwinsky, Gary & Linda Mechtly, Evelyn Misko, Jeanne Boehing, Alex Drobot, Rachelle, Jane Golofski, Doug Diller, Harry Krewsun, Mary Alice Babcock, Dorie Kunkle, Andrea, & Melissa [Betty O'Masta's relatives], Mary Evelyn King, Sam Wadrose, Isabella Olivia Lindgren, Ethel Thomas, Donna, Erin, Michael Miller, Grace & Owen Ostrasky, Patti Sinecki, David Genshi, Sue Segeleon, Mike Gallagher, Liz Stumpf, Theodore Nixon, Michelle Corba Kapeluck, Linda Hippert & family, Margaret Vladimir, Luke Emmerling, Robert McKivitz, Liz Obradovich, Halyna Zelinska [Archbishop Daniel's mother], Charlotte, Andrew Mark Olynyk, Deborah Finley, Claire Senita, Eleanor Kelly, Bryan, Nancy Barylak, Patrick Keenan, Khrystyna Chorniy, Anthony Cormier, Nathan Forbeck, Sarah Doyle, Samuel Peters, Esther Holupka, David Vallor, Henry Faraly, Julie Eiler, Dorothy Lednovich, Bob C., Allie—young girl with leukemia, Heather Kramer, Jane Wartinbee, Matthew—young man with cancer, Nicholas Orlando, Mary Ann Kuznik, Michael Pryhodzenko, Sonia Luciw, Theresa Ditto, Mary Ann Musial, Mary Pelino, Yvonne Christy, Myron & Barbara Spak, Julia Duda, Lisa Pandle, Kris & Julie Hanczar, John Kennedy, Loretta, Nancy, Carol, & Michael Sheliga, Gaelle Kelly, Irma McDivitt, Robin Young, Mckayla, Rachel, Carl &

Margaret Reed, Lydia Wilson, Robert Pointon, Walter Cecelia, John Persico, Jeff Miller, Mary Kernick, Glenn Miller, Jean Marie, Donna & Walter McCrackin, Bonnie & Eugene Blair [Pani Gina's parents], David Hoenshell, Barbara Macino, Shelley Hill, Mikaela Kapeluck, Linda Cawley, Gerald Cogley, Corey Guich, Robert Vangrin, Pauline Witkowsky, Sera White, Deborah Smith, Nancy & Eric Dunik, Julian Strozh [young lady with cerebral palsy], Dr. Kirsten Ream, Patricia Corey, Michelle, Katie Swarm, Michelle, Patrick, Linda Morris, Chris, David Hiles, Jennifer, Cher Mount, Frank & Janet Horrell, Jim Wandling, Gail, Sirena Sharp, Ron Paulovich, Sandi Anderson, Lina, Shirley, Denny Mader, Ella Campbell, Tom Hyatt, Bill Janiro, Jean Symanko-Andy's sister, William Lemonakis, Alma Wyke, Lindsay Romanczak & family, Susan Lucas, Neil Carter & family, James Paluh, Mickie Weikel, Evelyn Krempasky, Tammy Strunk, Loida Esbry, Darlene Chicka Deskins, Drew, Alice & Keith Philipa, Kateryna Kocelko, Nancy Heinbaugh, Mira Filipović, Lynn, Jacqueline, Sharon, Zan Cheng, Kristy, Elaine Ellenberger, Brandon, Anna Tranchine, Demetra, Blase Urban, Catherine Hogel & children, Jennifer & Dylan, Ron Schwartz, Lydia Wilson, Flora Tomlin, Howell Swarm, Jane Bielewicz Allred, Manny "Lazarus" Lopez, Glenn & Lucas Burlack, Katie Elizabeth, Mileva, & Michael, Deirdré Straughan, Terri Paluh, Lori & Steve Lucier, Kyranna Cherpas, Pastor Bruce Nordeen, Heather Ried, Carla Perry, Linda Elliot, Dennis McDaniel, Luke Tinsley, Brent, Tricia, Katherine Gorman, Pamela Jaquette, Sherri Walewski, Marika Zeliszczuk, Donna Davis, Jackie Crimbchin, Marta Charron, Mary [Corba], Stella McKeag, Margie Sekelsky, Gary Howell, Fran Fulton, Gina Catanese, Bill Vizza, Jamie Swarm, Kevin Allen (from Ancient Faith Radio), Kathy Flaherty, Tori Reade-Henry's niece, Derick-Glen Burlack's neighbor, Michael, Nichole & Christopher, Ben Douglas, Dianne Donahue, Zachary, Natasha, Noah Willard, Jodi Hanczar, Gregory Cervo, Lisa Bruce, Martha Nezolyk, Kathy Cvetkovich, Judy, Will, Emma, Ginny, Ye-Jin, Maria, John & JoAnn, Jim & Kitty, Phil Bouse, Ralph & Beverly Stoker, Noah Willard, Nikola, Natalie, Nikola, & Nevenka Jovonovich, Julia Collier, Amy Kemerer, Thomas Smith, Tracy Slaugenhaupt, Louis & Teresa Bercelli, Tom Nolan, Silvia Martin, Sarah Dorning, Dena & George, Georgia, Lawanda [Evelyn's niece], Maureen Sams, John Kendall, Judi Danser, Darcy, Denis Strittmatter, Nancy, Ian Brick, Cecilia Barnhart, Logan Magorien, Pam & Gordon Grant, Debbie & Jerry Novosel, Noah Willard, Sandra Dillard, Danielle McCann, Barry [Father Jim Orr's cousin], Tim Joyce, Mike Pawlyshyn-Jeannie Stutchell's brother, Joe Samchuck—vocations, Albert Heckman, Brianna Stumpf, Stanley Porembka, David & Terry Coyne Hartnett, Mike C., Jennifer Scheirer [Nick Behun's daughter], Catherine Beecham [Father Bob's cousin], JoAnne & Dave Andrews, Rev. Peg Bowman, Pat Jennings, Tim

Sams, Mike Ruzzi, Cindy M., Stephen Popichak—Fr. Bob's brother, Mary Kay Ludovicy, Pastor Sara Irwin, George Dilendorf, Andy Torick, Carol Behun, Erv Frye, William Lusherand, Bill Boretsky, Colin Kirton—Stage 4 pancreatic cancer, Clifford, Joe Veto, Paul Riley, Tonee & Sydnee Turner, Annette Paluh, Cathy Lotinsky, Monk Andrew, Jeff & Buschra Kerr, Steven—Harry Batch's cousin, Rose Mary Pavlovich—Mary Anne Kuznik's Cousin, Stella McKeag, Margaret Sekelsky, Robert Sekelsky, Robert Rodriguez, Dollie Irvin, Joe Mrvos, Alexandra, Katherine Kulik, Micky Delans [COVID-19], Pastor Terry Polen, Eleanor Kitt, Daniel Haun, and Susan Pulcini—Father Ted Pulcini's mom. ARNOLD: Homer Paul Kline and Walter Sakol. We pray that God will grant them all a speedy recovery.

A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU to Father Robert Holet for his kind donation to our parish. Father Bob was a surprise visitor to Holy Ghost on July 12 and enjoyed our Hot Dog Luncheon. He sent a wonderful note and a very generous donation to us. Thank you, Father Bob and Pani Christine for your kindness! God Bless and keep you always!

Thought for the day: "Good religion goes best with Common Sense!!!"

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ... There is NOTHING to keep us from praying...for each other, for our family and friends, and most of all for the first responders—EMTs, nurses, doctors, firefighters, police officers, and members of our military who keep us safe. Be well, and be SAFE!!! God Bless!

Please remember ALL American service men and women in your prayers. May God watch over them and all American service men and women—and bring them all home safely!

REMEMBER—PRAYERS ARE ALWAYS FREE!

Communion Fasting: nothing to eat or drink after midnight, EXCEPT in cases where your doctor tells you to eat or drink something for medical reasons: medication, diabetes, etc. If you have a question, please ask Father Bob.

AT ANY TIME—if there is an emergency, if you have questions, or if you just need to talk, please CALL FATHER BOB at [412] 279-5640.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

SUNDAY, AUGUST 23 **Divine Liturgy UPSTAIRS!!!** **10:30 AM**
11TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; AFTERFEAST OF THE TRANSFIGURATION;
HOLY MARTYRS ARCHDEACON LAURENCE & POPE SIXTUS, FELICISSIMUS &
AGAPTUS-DEACONS, AND OTHERS WITH THEM

Tone 2

1 Corinthians 9:2-12

Matthew 18:23-35

FRIDAY, AUGUST 28 **DORMITION OF THE MOST HOLY THEOTOKOS**

SUNDAY, AUGUST 30 **OBEDNITZA—UPSTAIRS!!!** **10:30 AM**
12TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; AFTERFEAST OF THE DORMITION; MARTYR
MYRON OF CYZICUS; MARTYRS THYRSUS, LEUCIUS, & CORONATUS & OTHERS
AT CAESAREA IN BITYNIA; MARTYRS PAUL & SISTER JULIANA OF SYRIA;
MARTYR PATROCLUS OF TROYES; MARTYRS STRATON, PHILIP, EUTYCHIAN,
& CYPRIAN OF NICOMEDIA; VENERABLE ALYPIUS THE ICONOGRAPHER OF
PERCHEVSKY LAVRA

Tone 3

1 Corinthians 15:1-11

Matthew 19:16-26

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 06 **OBEDNITZA—UPSTAIRS!!!** **10:30 AM**
13TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; HIEROMARTYR EUTYCHIUS-DISCIPLE OF
SAINT JOHN THE THEOLOGIAN; MARTYR TATION; VIRGIN-MARTYR CYRA OF
PERSIA; VENERABLE GEORGE LIMNIOTES-CONFESSOR OF MOUNT OLYMPUS

Tone 4

1 Corinthians 16;13-24

Matthew 21:33-42

Josephine Roman, Father John Harvey, Father Dragan Filipovic, Frank Gazella, Sr., Suzie Pelczar, Helen McNally, & Gerald Wampler--Fr. Bob

BULLETIN INSERT FOR 23 AUGUST 2020

**11TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST; AFTERFEAST OF THE
TRANSFIGURATION; HOLY MARTYRS ARCHDEACON LAURENCE &
POPE SIXTUS, FELICISSIMUS & AGAPTUS-DEACONS, AND OTHERS
WITH THEM**

TROPARION—TONE 2

When Thou didst descend to death, O Life Immortal,
Thou didst slay hell with the splendor of Thy Godhead!
And when from the depths Thou didst raise the dead,
All the powers of heaven cried out:

O Giver of Life! Christ our God! Glory to Thee!

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever,
and unto ages of ages. Amen.

KONTAKION—TONE 2

Hell became afraid, O Almighty Savior,
Seeing the miracle of Thy Resurrection from the tomb!
The dead arose! Creation, with Adam,
Beheld this and rejoiced with Thee!
And the world, O my Savior, praises Thee forever!

PROKEIMENON—TONE 2

READER: The Lord is my strength and my song. He has become my salvation.

PEOPLE: The Lord is my strength and my song. He has become my salvation.

READER: The Lord has chastened me sorely, but he has not given me over to death.

PEOPLE: The Lord is my strength and my song. He has become my salvation.

READER: The Lord is my strength and my song.

PEOPLE: He has become my salvation.

ALLELUIA VERSES—TONE 2

The Lord answer you in the day of trouble! The name of the God of Jacob protect you!

Good Morning ☀ Today's Word 🙏 (Galatians 6-7-)

Do not be deceived—God can not be mocked. Whatever a man Sows, he will reap in return.

I Lord, grant that I may meet this coming day brings to me with Spiritual Tranquility.

Grant that I may fully surrender myself to thy holy will.

At each and every hour of this day, direct and support me in all things. Whatsoever news may reach me in the course of the day, teach me to accept it with a calm soul and firm conviction that all is subject to Thy Holy Will.

Direct my thoughts and feelings in all my words and actions.

In all unexpected occurrences, do not let me forget that they are all sent down from you.

Grant that I may deal straightforwardly and wisely with every member of my family, neither embarrassing nor saddening anyone.

Lord, grant me the strength to endure the fatigue of the coming day and all the events that take place during it.

Direct my will and teach me to pray, to believe, to hope, to be patient, to forgive, and to love.

Please remember the sick and the suffering. Lord have mercy!

Have a thoughtful day. *Lazarus,* ☀️☀️🙏🙏 *[Samantha's husband]*

The Mother of God

Isaiah 7:14-Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. (KJV)

Mary was chosen from among all women of all centuries to have the virgin birth. Behold how we keep the beloved Mary the Mother of God in our hearts and minds. May Mary's virginity, her purity, be constant examples to inspire the way we live. Ponder the wisdom going into the Lord's selection for Mary to give birth to Jesus. May our thoughts always ascend to the Lord in gratitude for His choice of Mary. The wonder of the virgin birth continues to amaze believers of every century.

Matthew 1:23-Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. (KJV)

The virgin birth was declared centuries before the actual birth of the Lord Jesus. Being mindful of the Holy Prophets continues to bear relevance to the present day. God's Holy Church looks to the wisdom in the Holy Prophets and proclaims it. The Holy Prophets continue to give shape to God's Holy Church with relevance. The hunger in the soul finds nourishment from the Lord God in the Holy Prophets. Seekers of wisdom for living today wisely turn to the Holy Prophets for guidance.

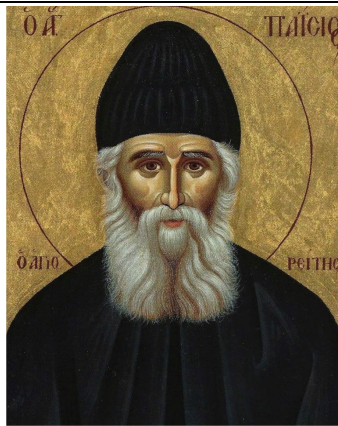
Luke 1:35-And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. (KJV)

The action of the Holy Spirit in Mary's life merits consideration of all believers. Earthly life is inseparable from unity with the Holy Spirit as personified in Mary. The Holy Spirit is within each person for daily recognition by the conscious mind. Love for the Lord God increases with acknowledgement of the Holy Spirit in life. Believers benefit by looking beyond the self to the Lord God at work in daily life. Jesus taking on human flesh, while remaining divine, changed the world forever.

John 19:26-When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! (KJV)

Even in His suffering on the Cross, the Lord took time to care for His mother. Let us consider the way we cause Jesus Christ to suffer by our daily sinfulness. Jesus continues to care for those He loves even as He is rejected by their sins. Mary's purity and obedience to the Lord point to the path believers are to follow. Each day is an opportunity to turn to the Mother of God for prayerful intercession. Mary, the Mother of God experienced the everlasting joy of giving birth to Jesus.

*Venerable Mother Angelina of Serbia. July 20/August 12, 2020.
Hidden Valley, Pennsylvania. Father Rodney Torbic*



The Beatitudes of St. Paisios of Mt. Athos

1. Blessed are those who love Christ more than all the worldly things and live far from the world and near God, with heavenly joys upon the earth.
2. Blessed are those who manage to live in obscurity and acquired great virtues but did not acquire even a small name for themselves.
3. Blessed are those who manage to act the fool and, in this way, protected their spiritual wealth.
4. Blessed are those who do not preach the Gospel with words, but live it and preach it with their silence, with the Grace of God, which betrays them.
5. Blessed are those who rejoice when unjustly accused, rather than when they are justly praised for their virtuous life. Here are the signs of holiness, not in the dry exertion of bodily asceticism and the great number of struggles, which, when not carried out with humility and the aim to take off the old man, create only illusions.
6. Blessed are those who prefer to be wronged rather than to wrong others and accept serenely and silently injustices. In this way, they reveal in practice that they believe in "one God, the Father Almighty" and expect to be vindicated by Him and not by human beings who repay in this life with vanity.

7. Blessed are those who have been born crippled or became so due to their own carelessness, yet do not grumble but glorify God. They will hold the best place in Paradise along with the Confessors and Martyrs, who gave their hands and feet for the love of Christ and now constantly kiss with devoutness the hands and feet of Christ in Paradise.

8. Blessed are those who were born ugly and are despised here on earth, because they are entitled to the most beautiful place in Paradise, provided they glorify God and do not grumble.

9. Blessed are those widows who wear black in this life, even unwillingly, but live a white spiritual life and glorify God without complaining, rather than the miserable ones who wear assorted clothes and live a spotted life.

10. Blessed and thrice blessed are the orphans who have been deprived of their parents' great affection, for they managed to have God as their Father already from this life. At the same time, they have the affection they were deprived of from their parents in God's savings bank "with interest".

11. Blessed are those parents who avoid the use of the word "don't" with their children, instead restraining them from evil through their holy life – a life which children imitate, joyfully following Christ with spiritual bravery.

12. Blessed are those children who have been born "from their mother's womb"(Mt. 19:12) holy, but even more blessed are those who were born with all the inherited passions of the world, struggled with sweat and uprooted them and inherited the Kingdom of God in the sweat of their face (Cf. Gen. 3:19).

13. Blessed are those children who lived from infancy in a spiritual environment and, thus, tirelessly advanced in the spiritual life.

Thrice blessed, however, are the mistreated ones who were not helped at all (on the contrary, they were pushed towards evil), but as soon as they heard of Christ, their eyes glistened, and with a one hundred and eighty degree turn they suddenly made their soul to shine as well. They departed from the attraction of earth and moved into the spiritual sphere.

14. Fortunate, worldly people say, are the astronauts who are able to spin in the air, orbit the moon or even walk on the moon.

Blessed, however, are the immaterial "Paradise-nauts", who ascend often to God and travel about Paradise, their place of permanent abode, with the quickest of means and without much fuel, besides one crust of bread.

15. Blessed are those who glorify God for the moon that glimmers that they might walk at night.

More blessed, however, are those who have come to understand that neither the light of the moon is of the moon, nor the spiritual light of their soul of themselves, but both are of God. Whether they can shine like a

mirror, a pane of glass or the lid of a tin can, if the rays of the sun do not fall on them, it is impossible for them to shine.

16. Fortunate, worldly people tell us, are those who live in crystal palaces and have all kinds of conveniences.

Blessed, however, are those who have managed to simplify their life and become liberated from the web of this world's development of numerous conveniences (i.e. many inconveniences), and were released from the frightening stress of our present age.

17. Fortunate, worldly people say, are those who can enjoy the goods of the world.

Blessed, however, are those who give away everything for Christ and are deprived even of every human consolation for Christ. Thus it is that they manage to be found night and day near Christ and His divine consolation, which many times is so much that they say to God: "My God, Thy love cannot be endured, for it is great and cannot be fit within my small heart".

18. Fortunate, worldly people say, are those who have the greatest jobs and the largest mansions, since they possess all means and live comfortably.

Blessed, however, according to the divine Paul, are those who have but a nest to perch in, a little food and some coverings. For, in this way, they've managed to become estranged from the vain world, using the earth as a footstool, as children of God, and their mind is constantly found close to God, their Good Father.

19. Fortunate are those who become generals and government ministers in their head by way of heavy drinking (even if just for a few hours), with the worldly rejoicing over it.

Blessed, however, are those who have put off the old man and have become incorporeal, managing to be earthly angels with the Holy Spirit. They have found Paradise's divine faucet and drink from it and are continually inebriated from the heavenly wine.

20. Blessed are those who were born crazy and will be judged as crazy, and, in this way, will enter Paradise without a passport.

Blessed and thrice blessed, however, are the very wise who feign foolishness for the love of Christ and mock all the vanity of the world. This foolishness for Christ's sake is worth more than all the knowledge and wisdom of the wise of this world.

-Written at the Chapel of the Holy Cross, 1972.

THE DISBELIEVING DOCTOR: "Christ does not get infected by viruses"

Demetrios Panagopoulos (1916-1982), the God-enlightened lay preacher, used to preach, even in the hospital Sotiria, where others did not dare approach due to the fear of tuberculosis.

There he was accompanied the priest, Fr. Demetrios Papantonis, who confessed the patients and celebrated the Divine Liturgy.

One day a doctor, who used to listen to the preaching, was troubled and approached the preacher, saying to him, "Mr. Panagopoulos, it is impossible for the priest to consume the content of the Holy Chalice.

Many patients receive Holy Communion from it. As is well-known the tuberculosis virus is spread through saliva. So, what does the priest do with the Lord's Body and Blood, which is leftover? Does he pour It into the special sink in the Altar, where sacred things are disposed of? If so, isn't this a serious sin?"

"Such a thing never happens," the preacher objected. "Christ does not get infected by viruses. Through the Holy Mystery there is no danger of infection."

Nevertheless, the doctor was not convinced. So, the preacher urged him to attend the next Divine Liturgy and, at the end, to stand somewhere where he could observe the priest consuming the Holy Gifts.

And so it happened. The doctor saw with his own eyes the priest consuming the content of the Holy Chalice. In particular, he saw him pouring wine into the chalice several times, taking care so that not even a tiny portion of the Lord's Body and Blood would remain.

From then on, now only did the doctor believe, but he also attended Divine Liturgy and communed with the patients.

(Boutsoulis, Georges and Basil, "Demetrios Panagopoulos, the Preacher (1916-1982)", Athens, 1993.



"The light of the Lord's transfiguration does not come into being or cease to be, nor is it circumscribed or perceptible to the senses, even though for a short time on the narrow mountain top it was seen by human eyes. Rather, at that moment the initiated disciples of the Lord "passed", as we have been taught, "from flesh to spirit" by the transformation of their

senses, which the Spirit wrought in them, and so they saw that ineffable light, when and as much as the Holy Spirit's power granted them to do so. Those who are not aware of this light and who now blaspheme against it think that the chosen apostles saw the light of the Lord's transfiguration with their created faculty of sight, and in this way they endeavor to bring down to the level of a created object not just that light — God's power and kingdom — but even the power of the Holy Spirit, by which divine things are revealed to the worthy. They have not heard, or have not believed, Paul's words, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (I Cor. 2:9-10)." (St Gregory Palamas, Sermon on the Transfiguration of Christ, 8)

We Are Veterans *Pretty much sums it up!*

[From my once and future next-door neighbor Rick Bateman!]

We left home as teenagers for an unknown adventure.

We loved our country enough to defend it and protect it with our own lives.

We said goodbye to friends and family and everything we knew.

We learned the basics and then we scattered in the wind to the far corners of the Earth.

We found new friends and new family.

We became brothers and sisters regardless of color, race or creed.

We had plenty of good times, and plenty of bad times.

We didn't get enough sleep.

We smoked and drank too much.

We picked up both good and bad habits.

We worked hard and played harder.

We didn't earn a great wage.

We experienced the happiness of mail call and the sadness of missing important events.

We didn't know when, or even if, we were ever going to see home again.

We grew up fast, and yet somehow, we never grew up at all.

We fought for our freedom, as well as the freedom of others.

Some of us saw actual combat, and some of us didn't.

Some of us saw the world, and some of us didn't.

Some of us dealt with physical warfare, most of us dealt with psychological warfare.

We have seen and experienced and dealt with things that we can't fully describe or explain, as not all of our sacrifices were physical.

We participated in time honored ceremonies and rituals with each other, strengthening our bonds and camaraderie.

We counted on each other to get our job done and sometimes to survive it at all.

We have dealt with victory and tragedy.

We have celebrated and mourned.

We lost a few along the way.

When our adventure was over, some of us went back home, some of us started somewhere new and some of us never came home at all.

We have told amazing and hilarious stories of our exploits and adventures.

We share an unspoken bond with each other, that most people don't experience, and few will understand.

We speak highly of our own branch of service, and poke fun at the other branches.

We know however, that, if needed, we will be there for our brothers and sisters and stand together as one, in a heartbeat.

Being a veteran is something that had to be earned, and it can never be taken away.

It has no monetary value, but at the same time it is a priceless gift.

People see a veteran and they thank them for their service.

When we see each other, we give that little upwards head nod, or a slight smile, knowing that we have shared and experienced things that most people have not.

So, from myself to the rest of the veterans out there, I commend and thank you for all that you have done and sacrificed for your country.

Try to remember the good times and forget the bad times.

Share your stories.

But most importantly, stand tall and proud, for you have earned the right to be called a Veteran.

