

The Anglican Orthodox Church International, Inc. SM

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THE MOST REV. JERRY L. OGLES—PRESIDING BISHOP

Veterans Day

November 11, 2010

ALMIGHTY God, our heavenly Father, in whose hands are the living and the dead; We give thee thanks for all those thy servants who have laid down their lives in the service of our country. Grant to them thy mercy and the light of thy presence, that the good work which thou hast begun in them may be perfected; through Jesus Christ thy Son our Lord. Amen (1928 American Prayer Book)

When I first became a cadet, I thought it a matter of great pride and joy to dress up in freshly starched battled dress and spit shined shoes, and march on the plain at West Point while the band played 'Stars and Stripes Forever'. But I soon learned that this was not the real life of a soldier. A soldier must get dirty; he must walk in the mud and ruin his spit shined boots. He doesn't always march to the applause of the crowd; he quite often is dodging bullets and grenades thrown by the crowd in the bushes. He

lives on the bare essentials going without food, under horrible conditions, when those safely at home never miss a hot meal. Such has been the story of our American veterans who have served in every war in which this country has been engaged from the

Revolutionary War in which men marched through the snow with only rags for boots, or the Mexican War in which Lee and Grant served in the same ranks to overcome the fortified heights of Vera Cruz, or the Civil War in which an equitable agreement could not be reached by Constitutional agreement and, therefore, the issue was decided by force of arms leaving deep wounds to fester.

On other battlefields of the Spanish American War (which reunited North & South behind a common enemy) the entrenched deserts behind barricades on San Juan Hill could not withstand the daring do of Teddy and his Rough Riders.

World War I was a war of terrible trench warfare and unparalleled use of chemical gasses which literally burned the lining of a man's lungs out of his breast, but our brave soldiers persevered and won the field.

World War II proved the overwhelming power of freedom over despotism. From Normandy to Bataan, and Iwo Jima to Sicily the Western powers prevailed based more on a liberty-borne grit and determination than sheer overwhelming resources on the line.

And the American contribution to that war effort reinforced our unity with old friends abroad.

From Pusan to Inchon harbor, and Hanoi to Vung Tau, American soldiers proved time and again their superiority over despotic forces of tyranny but, unfortunately, unable to overcome the hidden enemy at home.

But through all these wars, the American soldier lived up to the high Constitutional calling of defense of that Constitution "against all enemies, foreign and domestic." The veteran never surrenders the role of soldier, for once a soldier, always a soldier. We are blest that we have such heroic men among us. Do not pass up the opportunity to thank a veteran for the great freedom and liberty you enjoy as a result of their sacrifice.

Jerry L. Ogles

✠ Jerry L. Ogles, D.D.

Presiding Bishop,

Anglican Orthodox Communion Worldwide

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