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Reveille for the Soul

Prayers for Military Life

Prayers compiled by
MARGE FENELON



Liguori
LIGUORI, MISSOURI

Imprimi Potest:
Thomas D. Picton, C.Ss.R.
Provincial, Denver Province
The Redemptorists

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Published by Liguori Publications
Liguori, Missouri 63057-9999

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Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Reveille for the soul : prayers for military life : prayers / compiled by
Marge Fenelon. — 1st ed.

p. cm.

ISBN 978-0-7648-1878-3

1. Armed forces —Prayers and devotions. I. Fenelon, Marge.

BV273.R48 2010

242'.68 —dc22

2010011835

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To order, call 800-325-9521
www.liguori.org

Printed in the United States of America
14 13 12 11 10 5 4 3 2 1
First Edition

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HURRY UP AND WAIT— ALWAYS IN TRANSITION



I grew up in a rough section of South Philadelphia, raised in a “blue collar” family with limited money, but lots of love. I have the best parents that anyone could ever have. And because of that, it was very difficult to leave family and friends for the life of an Airman, my true step into “adulthood.”

To this day, one of the scariest days of my life began the day I departed for Basic Training. After all, why would anyone in their right mind want to give up everything they love—family, friends, the comfort of the only life they’ve known their entire young life—to step into a totally new world? A world where they don’t know a single soul; are told what to do twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week; and are very far from home!

For most, it's a lifetime of firsts: the first time away from home, first time on a plane, first time relying solely on oneself, and, for some, it is the first time they rely on prayer to help them get through each day. At least that's what I thought. From the moment I arrived at the Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS), I realized that most of the young men and women I met were just like me—all in search of a better life, a life of service to their nation. Every person has a different "story" about why he or she took this first step to a new life, but I soon realized that none of us would be successful without teamwork; confidence in self and others; faith in those who have been given the responsibility to teach us; and, of course, faith in the Lord. Faith in the Lord can guide us through the most challenging times in our lives.

We rely on faith to get us through each day; on the final day of Basic Training, when we put on the service dress uniform for the first time, are called "Airman," and complete graduation, most of us thank God for giving

us the strength to complete the experience and go on to our next challenge. I have been thanking God ever since!

Chief Master Sgt. (Ret.) Kenneth J. McQuiston*

* Chief Master Sergeant Kenneth J. McQuiston recently retired as the Command Senior Enlisted Leader of the U.S. Transportation Command at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, after 28 years of service. As such, he served as the principal advisor to the Combatant Commander for all matters concerning joint force integration, career development, utilization, and sustainment of more than 150,000 enlisted personnel from all branches serving the headquarters and USTRANSCOM's air, land, and sea components throughout the world. Chief McQuiston entered the Air Force in April 1982; after completing basic military training and technical training, he served in various administrative and personnel management positions at squadron, wing, and major command levels. His assignments included command chief master sergeant at the wing, numbered air force, and deployed area of operations supporting "Operation Enduring Freedom" in Afghanistan.

RECRUITING

Dear Lord,
I remember the anxiety I felt the first day I left
for basic training.

Missing home, leaving my family, waking up to
the unknown at the sound of reveille.

I pray for the armed forces' brand new recruits.
Walk with them and give them the strength
they will need to adjust to that unknown every
day while they shape themselves to become the
leaders of tomorrow.

Staff Sgt. Adam Therrian
345th Recruiting Squadron

CHALLENGE AND DIVERSITY

Almighty God,
Today I give you thanks and praise for your
continuing presence with me wherever I may
be. As the military moves me from place to
place, for training and development purposes,
thank you for going with me and before me.

There are so many uncertainties, challenges, and changes that come suddenly. Therefore, O God, grant me strength for these transitions, however they come. Help me to be ready and prepared to serve my country and you as I've been called to do.

And Lord, as I learn the military way of life, help me to accept these vastly diverse peoples, places, and requirements. Grant patience to my fellow soldiers and me in the midst of an ever-changing world. As you were faithful to those in the Scriptures, help me to be faithful to you.

Amen.

Chaplain (LTC) David I. Lee
Alabama Army National Guard
226th Area Support Group
Operation Iraqi Freedom, 2003-2004
Camp Arifjan, Kuwait

TRAINING

Eternal God,

Bless our military personnel, both those who lead and those who follow. Guide and protect them in their training, as they prepare to serve within our national and international locations around the globe. Increase their faith in justice, multiply their strength for service, and give them a sense of calm in the midst of constant transitions.

Allow our military men and women to understand that your omnipresence extends to any military base in the world. Let them remember they are an unquestionable asset to our country and our world. Help our men and women in military uniforms to display a confidence-inspiring spirituality, professionalism, and understanding of military life. Direct them to be progressively more effective, and willing to build more bridges, in order to accomplish objectives that are in the best interest of humanity.

Bless their leadership, honor their extensive education, and increase their work responsibilities, so it will clearly convey their dedication toward honor and duty. We ask you, God, to sustain their relationships with their family members who are anxiously and impatiently waiting to physically reunite with them again soon.

We are thankful for the millions of people who have served in our military throughout the generations. May every citizen realize that our country is better and safer because of their valiant efforts.

Thank you, God, for hearing our prayers and for giving us the men and women who serve in our United States military. God, bless the United States of America; God, bless the United States military; God, bless the world.

Chaplain Capt. Ken J. Walden
United States Air Reserves (USAR)
452nd Air Mobility Wing, March Air Reserve Base

COMBAT PREPARATION

The boundary lines have fallen for me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage.

Psalm 16:6

Reflection

Yesterday morning I received an e-mail from my oldest son, who is a teacher and the head coach of soccer and baseball at his high school. He said something that struck me as capturing the essence of life's journey: "I really had a great group of horrible athletes this year. We had no talent and excelled." This illustrates an element of boundary lines falling in pleasant places, or "playing the cards one is dealt"—making a choice that becomes either a pleasant or a painful one. For a soccer coach or a commanding general of combat troops, excellence is not always defined by having the finest athletes or the finest combat troops. It is about doing the best you can with who you have. It is about not quitting ever, and finding that making an effort with the people you have

makes life pleasant and within these “boundary lines.” There is a peace that is unsurpassed and leads to a life of fulfillment—what a “goodly heritage!”

Prayer

Lord of glory, every moment you have given me can be a delight if I will only trust your boundary lines, instead of moving the chalk line because I think I know better.

Amen.

Chaplain Col. Kenneth N. Brown
Multi-National Corps-Iraq

GOD’S WILL

Here I am Lord,
I seek to do your will.
What would you like
for me to do for you today?

Chaplain Col. (Ret.) Leonard F. Stegman
United States Army

MISSION SUCCESS

God of protection and security,
I lift up this prayer as my unit embarks on
a mission. Give me the courage to perform
my duties with the utmost integrity, that
my service might bring credit to myself, my
unit, my country, and ultimately to you, O
God. I willingly put myself in harm's way
in service to my country, in order to protect
our citizens, our allies, and innocent people.
It's my earnest prayer that you grant this
mission success and guarantee the safety of all
servicemembers in my unit. I recognize that
whatever dangers I face, I do not face alone.
My fellow servicemembers are with me, and
you watch over me and inspire me. Help me to
experience your presence and peace in the face
of uncertainty and danger.

Grant wisdom to my commanding officer and to those in authority over me. Guide them to make good decisions, and to take appropriate risks for the sake of the mission. Be with my fellow servicemembers, so that we might work as a team and do our jobs as we have been trained to do. Inspire us, each and every one, to be committed to our mission and to each other.

Bless my family back home and keep them safe. Help them to know that I love them and care for them dearly. Though I am away from them in body, my thoughts are ever with them. As they pray for me, hear their prayers, and answer them.

Amen.

Chaplain Lt. Steven J. Voris
United States Navy

PLANNING

Lord,

Your words to the prophet Jeremiah remind me that you know the plans you have for me. They are plans for me to prosper and not bring me harm, plans to give me “a future with hope” (Jeremiah 29:11). You are the author of time itself. Therefore, you are the great orchestrator of all, and I come before you seeking your wisdom as I set about scheduling the time you’ve given me and as I enter the planning process.

You know all the tasks that are laid out before me. Some tasks have been assigned to me by others in authority. Other agenda items come from my own heart’s desires. For all that is set before me to do and accomplish, I seek your guidance. I seek spiritual discernment to choose judiciously. I pray for insight to schedule and plan activities that will bring you honor and glory. Help me to choose activities that will enrich my life and, more importantly, the lives of others.

Free me from selfish actions that would benefit no one else. Help me to avoid unfruitful endeavors that do nothing to advance your cause. Use me as an instrument of peace even as I am in the profession of arms. Make your will known so that in my life and work, I may ever be your servant. May your Holy Spirit prepare my way. May your presence always guide my footsteps.

I pray this in the name of the one who consulted you in all things, and planned and adjusted his life to your will, Christ our Lord. Amen.

Chaplain Capt. Joseph G. Fisher
48th FW/HC
Royal Air Force Lakenheath, England