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## Focus on Religious Freedom

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# Memorial Day 2024 - Some Gave All

Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, is a day of remembrance for those who died in our nation's service. It is in our remembering that these American patriots live on. It is by continuing their steadfast defense of our liberties, especially Religious Freedom, that we honor their sacrifice and live up to their rightful expectations of those who live and breathe in the very freedoms for which they died.

Since the first battles to gain America's independence, the families of 1.8 million Americans have sacrificed the joy and presence of their loved ones to the defense of America's freedoms. On this Sunday before Memorial Day, how fitting that prayers for these fellow Americans should fill our hearts with gratitude for their sacrifice. Let us remember them in the parades and memorial services, by placing flags on their graves, and reading their epitaphs.

We can acknowledge and thank today's surviving families for their loved ones' service and take part in the National Moment of Remembrance with respectful silence at 3pm on Memorial Day.

John Adams, one of our Founding Fathers, said, "Posterity! You will never know how much it cost the present Generation to preserve your Freedom! I hope you will make good use of it. If you do not, I shall repent in Heaven, that I ever took half the Pains to preserve it."

America's freedom of religion is under grave and immediate threat from government regulations, denial of freedom of speech and court-determined imposition of secular values. Because America's religious freedom is now under attack, we must assume an active defense of what Pope Benedict XVI called "the most cherished of Americans freedoms". In good conscience we can do no less. Our children's freedoms are not ours to lose.

**The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' prayer for all who died in service to our nation:**

**"O God, by whose mercy the faithful departed find rest, look kindly on your departed veterans who gave their lives in the service of their country. Grant that through the passion, death and resurrection of your Son they may share in the joy of your heavenly kingdom and rejoice in you with your saints forever.**

**We ask this through Christ the Lord. Amen**