

Memorial Day Remembrance – 2023: Saint Mary Pays Our Respects

For the 17th Consecutive year, the Saint Mary Memorial Day Committee has committed to honoring the memories of those in the extended community who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

Each year, a group of dedicated parents, friends, and benefactors of the Parish, School and



Community join together to give local veterans a stage. Veterans who are willing to share their presence and their memories are provide a time, in the middle of the remembrance ceremony, to



invoke special attention to their comrades who didn't make it home from their final deployment.

The day usually starts with veterans arriving on campus and enjoying coffee and breakfast treats in Father Hedge Hall. At 9:00 am., the students, staff, and families join the veterans at Mass.

After Mass, the group makes its way to the to the flagpole, where a simple raising of the flag – to half-mast – is followed by a rousing medley of armed services ballads, rendered by Mr. Rembisz



on the bagpipes. This year, Mr. Rembisz was joined by fellow piper, Mike Brown.

After the flag ceremony, the attendees return to the Church for a moving remembrance ceremony. For most of the previous 17 celebrations, Mr. Eric Ponzek has served as Master of Ceremonies. Mr. Ponzek introduced two parents, Mr. Rosenbum, who was a Chief Warrant Officer in the Marine Corps, and Mr. Brian Gaspar, who served as a lieutenant in the US Navy.

Mr. Robert Hawke, Retired USMC, also played Taps as part of the ceremony, fittingly invoking memory of the fallen.

Student participation this year included a presentation on the origination and history of Memorial Day

by Kira Bushey, Julianna klenieski, Ava Mauger, and Sarah Moffa – all grade 6. Matthew McELroy presented a riveting treatise on valor and represented the 7th grade. Andrew Baker, Grade 8,



recited an original poem, “Remembrance” as it applies to this special holiday. Finally, Lena Gaspar



made the 5th grade proud with a tribute to Samuel Shultz, her uncle, who lost his life in a helicopter crash in 2018.

Mrs. Weidemoyer and the Choir, with support from Drew Antrobus on violin, provided musical accompaniment throughout, with the 5th grade signing – not singing – to Lee Greenwood’s “God Bless the USA.”

The veterans are then treated to a luncheon in Hedge Hall to round out the afternoon.

The Memorial Day Remembrance Committee, earns great and deserved praise each year for their remarkable service. Legacy contributors include Mrs. Mazzio and Mrs. Perkins, whose service dates back to the earliest of the celebrations. Also deserving of praise for a long history of contribution are Mr. Rembisz, and Miss Beth, who takes charge of everything from invitations to programs to coordination of the various elements of the event series. Assuming primary roles these past two years are Mrs. Spevak and Mr. Talone, with yeoman help from Mrs. Rhuberg, Mrs. Rosenbum, Mrs. Klenieski, and Mrs. Giampa.

We Thank everyone for their support.