



GOODNESS AND MERCY

Memorial Day (Observed) is this coming Monday, May 25.

We pause to remember our loved ones who served in the military, and, especially those who died while serving.

And, if not in a Church or Chapel service, at least on the TV or radio we will hear (and sing along?) “America the Beautiful” – notice **goodness and mercy**:

O beautiful for spacious skies,
For amber waves of grain,
For purple mountain majesties
Above the fruited plain!
America! America!
God shed His grace on thee,
**And crown thy good with
brotherhood**
From sea to shining sea.

Of course, the 3rd stanza is even more appropriate as we remember the fallen:

O beautiful for heroes proved

In liberating strife,

Who more than self their country loved

And mercy more than life!

America! America!

May God thy gold refine,

‘Til all success be nobleness,

And ev’ry gain divine.

That **bolded** line always chokes me up!

We might, then, pray again, this year, that God will comfort all survivors of those who died while serving. We might even pray that God will inspire us all, by their sacrifice, to continue treating one another with **goodness and mercy**.

Further, although we should not directly compare the “war on COVID-19” to WWII or the Korean War, perhaps we may, nevertheless, use the vocabulary of that great hymn of America, and give thanks for those who are taking “necessary risks” while under the threat of the corona virus – those who work and serve in hospitals, nursing centers, grocery stores, meat packing plants, orchards – each one who is providing an “essential” service. And we might give thanks to God that many of them, in a sense, “**love mercy more than life.**”

Perhaps God will even use this present crisis to reduce evil in our nation and develop more goodness. Then that prayer will have more meaning: “**And crown thy good with brotherhood**” – Amen!

Finally, may the **mercy** and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you, to strengthen you and grant you endurance.

- Chaplain Rick Bradley