



Dear Faithful:

In the early years of the twentieth century, a war called the Great War involved most of the countries of the earth. Millions died as a result of new and terrible weapons. Everyone hoped that it was the "war to end all wars." A very special time was chosen as the hour when the guns would be stilled, and peace declared: the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. By this choice, the signers of the peace treaty suggested that humankind had waited until it was nearly too late.

(From the book: *Companion to the Calendar*, by Mary Ellen Hynes)

The eleventh day of the eleventh month is also known as the Memorial of St. Martin of Tours. As a turning point in his life as a soldier, he came upon a beggar who was suffering from the cold. Martin took his sword and cut his military cloak in half and gave half to the beggar. Later that night, he had a dream of Jesus wrapped in his cloak. It was at that moment he knew he must be baptized. Later, he would make the decision to set down his sword with the declaration to emperor: "I am a soldier for Christ. It is not lawful for me to fight." But he did not sit back passively. He generously gave his life in service to the gospel. First as a layman, then as a priest and bishop. And, through his witness to Christ, many in Gaul become Christian. So profound was his life of generous love for God's people, that he was the first saint canonized in the Church that was not a martyr.

As I say thank you and ask God's blessing on all veterans, I will highlight one person specifically. Dr. Nicholas Rossi, a dear friend to the Newman Catholic Student Center, died a week ago, in the early morning of November 5th. He served in World War II, as a medic in the Army Medical Corps, in the Pacific Theater and at the battle of Saipan. After his service to his country in the Army, he led a life of service as a cardio-thoracic surgeon and professor here at the University of Iowa Hospital. He was a true Renaissance Man, having great knowledge and experience in many areas including culture and the arts. He established the Rossi Center for Faith and Culture here at the Newman Center to help students learn and discuss how faith and culture interface in their daily lives. This past Wednesday, our nationally recognized speaker, Dr. Stacey Trasancos gave her talk: *Science was Born of Christianity: The Role of Christianity in Modern Science*. She was chosen to come speak by Dr. Rossi himself.

Happy Veterans Day to all of you who have served in the military, whether in time of war or time of peace. Remember that we are all called to be soldiers of Christ. Carrying, always, the most awesome weapon ever created - the love of God.

Have a blessed weekend!

Fr. Jeff Belger
Priest Director