

OUR OATH

At each of our American Legion Meetings, as we follow the agenda as outlined in the "Officers Guide and Manual of Ceremonies", after Posting the Colors, the Chaplain offers a beginning prayer, or Invocation. An "Invocation" is simply "a prayer or request for the spiritual presence of God in a ceremony or event", per the Oxford Dictionary. We do this, like our nation's founding fathers, the veterans who founded The American Legion acknowledged God as the source of all our rights and freedoms. It is more than a tradition that we follow. It is a serious and earnest request of God to not just be present at our meetings sitting in the back silently, as some of our members may often do. It is a request that God actively be with and grant us his wisdom and love in our conduct and deliberations for the success of The American Legion, our nation's Security, our Veterans and Families.

After all business has been completed, and before the Colors of our Nation have been retired, a Closing Prayer is to be offered. It often includes requests to God for safe travels home for those in attendance, keeping in our hearts and minds those who have gone before us, God's protection for our nation, the military, and their families, and "till we meet again", just to name a few things.

Hopefully, we all can say that during the meeting, whatever it may have been for, we allowed God's wisdom, grace, mercy, and love to dictate how we act, what we say or do, and how our decisions were made, for the benefit of each of our Four Pillars of The American Legion. If you don't know what they are, look them up, or better yet, take the Basic Legion On-Line Course, and find out.

But, is that the end of it, the end of our obligation to community, state, and nation, our neighbors, and our desire to have God's presence in our personal lives until the next meeting? Along with the Opening Prayer, or Invocation, we also recite the Pledge of Allegiance to our Flag, and the preamble to the Constitution of the American Legion slowly and in unison, as if a "Meditation" to ourselves and WITH each other. Both of these recitations are more than just saying the words, they are where we as Legionnaires, together in unison, take

an oath to God, our country, and the American Legion. Those Oaths are not valid for just during the meeting. They continue and have power between the meetings, as well. As with the oaths that we took upon entering the military, there is NOT an expiration date. Also, that oath many of us have taken in our marriage vows - "To have to hold...", these oaths are a life-long commitment - "Till death do us part...".

So, why am I bringing these things up that we all should be so much aware of? I'm just trying to remind us all, including myself, what our roll is in our lives to our country, to The American Legion one thing "*To consecrate and sanctify our comradeship by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.*" This includes but is not limited to "**BETHEONE**" for each other and our veterans and neighbors, and that ANYTHING evil or self-serving should have no place in our lives. God put us on this earth to be there for EACH OTHER, to help, care for, and above all Love Him and one another throughout our lives, 24/7/365. It's just that simple, but sadly forgotten sometimes. "For God and Country".

I Pray:

Dear Lord God, Supreme Commander of all, we come to You to help us be the people, the Legionnaires, You want us to be, to forgive our neighbors as You forgive us, to be thankful each and every day for the blessings that You have bestowed upon us and this great nation of ours, and that we may love our neighbors as ourselves, not wanting to cause hurt or harm in any way. We also humbly ask for You guidance, wisdom, grace and mercy in all that we do. In Your Heavenly Name. Amen.