



Catholic War Veterans of the USA  
 Father Vincent Capodanno Memorial Post  
*To Heal, Serve, Love, Listen*

Thirty-Fifth Edition

est. 11/24/2015

January 2019



Father Vincent Robert Capodanno, M.M.

**MEETING NOTICE**  
**NEXT MEETING IS WEDNESDAY**  
**February 6th AT 7:00 PM**  
**WEATHER PERMITTING**  
**At Our Lady of Mercy Country**  
**Home**  
**2115 Maturana Dr.**  
**Liberty MO 64068**

**DUES**

It is that time of year again. Amazing how time flies. It is time to renew your membership. So, if you have some spare change – like **Thirty Dollars** – please renew your membership. Make your check or money order out to “CWV Post 1974” and mail it to CWV Post 1974, 2115 Maturana Dr., Liberty MO 64068. MO. So far thirty-seven members have renewed –this includes all of the life members. That leaves just eight members still unpaid.

The states in which those who still need to pay are: one in Iowa, four in Missouri, and three in Kansas. Check your membership card. If it does not say 2019, you have not paid. This does not include Life Members.

Thanks

**WHAT’S BEEN HAPPENING**

We have a new member who presently lives in Moberly, Mo. He has written several articles for “Veterans’ Voices” .

I hope to print some of his articles in future newsletters, with his permission. Here is a poem he wrote for the Summer 2018 edition:

Final Moment

By Shon Pernice  
 ---Moberly MO

I watched him die—  
 I did everything I could.  
 I didn't ask God for help,  
 but I sure as hell cursed him as I witnessed  
 The Final Moment. That Moment, it's forever  
 ingrained in my memory banks.  
 I deal with it every day.  
 I get so overwhelmed with sadness,  
 my tears confirm my state of mind.  
 The image of a young soldier,  
 a man who joined to serve his country  
 After terrorists tried to destroy our will.  
 His blue eyes stared off,  
 pupils dilated wide,  
 Skin is pale and cold  
 Due to massive blood loss  
 I now wear the crimson fluid  
 That once gave him life.

That Final Moment has forever  
Created an invisible wound—  
A wound that doesn't leak blood,  
but flows tears.  
I don't allow others to get close to me,  
for I fear that if I witness just one more death,  
I will then have to create my own –  
Final Moment.

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## Chaplains

Our post has a high regard for our chaplains, especially those who are deployed. They mean so much for those who happen to be in harms way and place their lives on the line defending our country.

That is the main reason our post is named after Father Capodanno. His life and death can and should be a role model for all of us. The same is true about Father Emil Kapaun, Army Chaplain who died in a Chinese POW camp during the Korean War. Below is an article about the presentation of the MOH by President Obama on April 12, 2013.

Fr. Kapaun, Korean War Army Chaplain, Receives Medal  
of Honor

April 12, 2013 By Gretchen Filz

On April 11th, 2013 President Obama posthumously awarded Fr. Emil Kapaun (April 20, 1916 – May 23, 1951) a medal of honor for his service, valor, and self-sacrifice as an Army chaplain during the Korean War. Read more about Fr. Kapaun [here](#).

Chaplain Kapaun, a Catholic priest from Kansas, was awarded the medal for his extraordinary heroism while serving with the 3d Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division during combat operations against an armed enemy at Unsan, Korea and as a POW in November 1950.

Less than a month later, Kapaun would, without regard for his own life, save a fellow soldier from certain death.



Fr. Kapaun celebrating Mass during the Korean War using the hood of a Jeep as his altar, Oct 7, 1950. Photo: U.S. Army

As reported on the White House blog, here is the transcript of the President's words when he awarded the medal to Ray Kapaun, Fr. Kapaun's nephew at the White House:

"After the Communist invasion of South Korea, [Father Kapaun] was among the first American troops that hit the beaches and pushed their way north through hard mountains and bitter cold. In his understated Midwestern way, he wrote home, saying, "this outdoor life is quite the thing" and "I prefer to live in a house once in a while." But he had hope, saying, "It looks like the war will end soon."

That's when Chinese forces entered the war with a massive surprise attack — perhaps 20,000 soldiers pouring down on a few thousand Americans. In the chaos, dodging bullets and explosions, Father Kapaun raced between foxholes, out past the front lines and into no-man's land — dragging the wounded to safety.

When his commanders ordered an evacuation, he chose to stay — gathering the injured, tending to their wounds. When the enemy broke through and the combat was hand-to-hand, he carried on — comforting the injured and the dying, offering some measure of peace as they left this Earth.

When enemy forces bore down, it seemed like the end — that these wounded Americans, more than a dozen of them, would be gunned down. But Father Kapaun spotted a wounded Chinese officer. He pleaded with this Chinese officer and convinced him to call out to his fellow Chinese. The shooting stopped and they negotiated a safe surrender, saving those American lives.

Then, as Father Kapaun was being led away, he saw another American — wounded, unable to walk, laying in a ditch, defenseless. An enemy soldier was standing over him, rifle aimed at his head, ready to shoot. And Father Kapaun marched over and pushed the enemy soldier aside. And then as the soldier watched, stunned, Father Kapaun carried that wounded American away.

This is the valor we honor today — an American soldier who didn't fire a gun, but who wielded the mightiest weapon of all, a love for his brothers so pure that he was willing to die so that they might live. And yet, the incredible story of Father Kapaun does not end there.

He carried that injured American, for miles, as their captors forced them on a death march. When Father Kapaun grew tired, he'd help the wounded soldier hop on one leg. When other prisoners stumbled, he picked them up. When they wanted to quit — knowing that stragglers would be shot — he begged them to keep walking.

In the camps that winter, deep in a valley, men could freeze to death in their sleep. Father Kapaun offered them his own clothes. They starved on tiny rations of millet and corn and birdseed. He somehow snuck past the guards, foraged in nearby fields, and returned with rice and potatoes. In desperation, some men hoarded food. He convinced them to share. Their bodies were ravaged by dysentery. He grabbed some rocks, pounded metal into pots and boiled clean water. They lived in filth. He washed their clothes and he cleansed their wounds.

The guards ridiculed his devotion to his Savior and the Almighty. They took his clothes and made him stand in the freezing cold for hours. Yet, he never lost his faith. If anything, it only grew stronger. At night, he slipped into huts to lead prisoners in prayer, saying the Rosary,

administering the sacraments, offering three simple words: "God bless you." One of them later said that with his very presence he could just for a moment turn a mud hut into a cathedral.

That spring, he went further — he held an Easter service. As the sun rose that Easter Sunday, he put on [his] purple stole and led dozens of prisoners to the ruins of an old church in the camp. And he read from a prayer missal that they had kept hidden. He held up a small crucifix that he had made from sticks. And as the guards watched, Father Kapaun and all those prisoners — men of different faith, perhaps some men of no faith — sang the Lord's Prayer and "America the Beautiful." They sang so loud that other prisoners across the camp not only heard them, they joined in, too — filling that valley with song and with prayer.

That faith — that they might be delivered from evil, that they could make it home — was perhaps the greatest gift to those men; that even amidst such hardship and despair, there could be hope; amid their misery in the temporal they could see those truths that are eternal; that even in such hell, there could be a touch of the divine. Looking back, one of them said that that is what "kept a lot of us alive."

Yet, for Father Kapaun, the horrific conditions took their toll. Thin, frail, he began to limp, with a blood clot in his leg. And then came dysentery, then pneumonia. That's when the guards saw their chance to finally rid themselves of this priest and the hope he inspired. They came for him. And over the protests and tears of the men who loved him, the guards sent him to a death house — a hellhole with no food or water — to be left to die.

And yet, even then, his faith held firm. "I'm going to where I've always wanted to go," he told his brothers. "And when I get up there, I'll say a prayer for all of you." And then, as was taken away, he did something remarkable — he blessed the guards. "Forgive them," he said, "for they know not what they do." Two days later, in that house of death, Father Kapaun breathed his last breath. His body was taken away, his grave unmarked, his remains unrecovered to this day. "

The President was speaking to an audience that included several of Father Kapaun's relatives, as well as a number of the American heroes who served alongside him—veterans and former POWs from the Korean War. They came to the White House to witness President Obama bestow our nation's highest military decoration, the Medal of Honor, on Emil Kapaun six decades after his death. As one of Father Kapaun's comrades said when he heard the news, "it's about time."

Father Kapaun is also under consideration at the Vatican for canonization.

same sacrifices as men. As a woman with military service, you may qualify for a wide range of benefits offered by the \*\*\*\*\*  
"Transition does not end when you first get out of the military. Veterans must have opportunities for later support as needs arise."

Participant from the DAV  
Women Veterans Focus Group  
August 11, 2014 (4)

DAV's Women Veterans: The Journey Ahead spotlights how the expanding role of women in our armed forces is necessitating changes to an array of policies and programs in the Department of Veterans Affairs and other federal agencies. This report offers 45 key recommendations covering a broad range of issues affecting women veterans throughout their lifetime, including primary and gender-specific healthcare, mental health and readjustment services, and disability and employment benefits.

This publication comes as a follow up to DAV's 2014 landmark report Women Veterans: The Long Journey Home, which focused on the challenges women encounter transitioning from military to civilian life and helped usher in numerous policy and legislative changes to improve programs and services for women veterans.

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#### Something to think about

Recently in the news there was a story about a young man during the right to life protest in Washington DC. There was a video showing this young man, student from Covington Catholic High School in Kentucky smiling while a Native American pounded on a drum just inches from the young man's face. The young man just stood there, did not get angry, and just smiled.

Because of a video posted on facebook, immediately the press, news, even his school officials and some Catholic Bishop began blaming the young man of being racist and other things. When the full video came out, it proved that the young man was a gentleman, did nothing wrong, and was respectful of the drum beater.

This is just another example of how certain people jump on the band wagon to accuse our young adults and our Church of wrong doing without any proof. The full video shows the man walked up to the young man and began beating the drum just inches from his face. We can be proud of the young man for keeping his cool and he is a credit to his school and our faith.

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### Women Veterans

Women served in the United States Military as early as the Revolutionary War. Since then, women of all ages, ranks, and levels of authority have entered every branch of service, made significant contributions, and suffered the