

# Memorial Sanctuary Address Of Dedication

For the benefit of those who did not attend the dedication of Indian River Memorial Sanctuary, the Press-Journal is printing the dedicatory address which was given by the Rev.



Rev. Donald Ray Jones

Donald Ray Jones, minister of the First Presbyterian Church of Vero Beach, representing the Indian River Ministerial Association.

In the beautiful surroundings of this sanctuary, on a lovely Florida Sunday afternoon in May, in the presence of the relatives of the heroes from Indian River County who gave their lives for their country, the hundreds who heard the address will long remember it.

### TODAY'S RESOLUTION AND TOMORROW'S CERTAINTY

What a distinct honor it is for me to stand before you on this occasion representing the Indian River County Ministerial Association, bringing you brief remarks of dedication surrounding this moment as we honor those veterans of military service who gave their lives that we might live ours.

Our purpose today is three-fold: First, we are met in remembrance of deeds of heroism which defy our imagination. Second, we are met to honor with our lips and our hearts these who gave supremely and Third, we are hopefully to resolve that our remembrance and honoring will be implemented in actions which, while small in comparison to the great acts of those whose names appear on the memorials, when taken in the aggregate will be written large in the annals of human history.

We would today REMEMBER these gallants and the laying down of their lives for country and for a cause to which they pledged their beings. We remember them, not solely for the final throbbing moment which extracted from them their last vitality, but for their daily deeds and behavior prompting them, upon call from their country, to respond with vigor to use our strength. God might provide them in helping our nation and world in time of deep crisis.

Although possessing Spartan courage and excessive strength, we remember that these honored dead were ordinary, simple men like ourselves, not supermen having a key to resources beyond the mortal store. These were men who were invigorated by the briskness of the ocean air and whose arteries pulsed anew with the coming of spring.

These were the men who when called to battle, faced the enemy with courage, but nonetheless sensed the same gnawing fear that ever creeps over the human frame when in jeopardy. They were not exempt from fear even though brave. Tremoratory is that which conquers fear, not that exempted from its clutches.

A leading general of the Second World War made this very clear when he said the best soldier was "one who knew his fears and could openly speak of them without shame. Give me that man," he said, "and I will show you a soldier whose gallantry will outshine the fool whose mind is so small that the honest emotion of fear cannot gain admittance."

It is a poignant thought that these whose names are registered in our minds today, doubtless knew the deep, disquieting anguish of fear. And if they were not in fear at the time of their taking, they doubtless were aware of it at other times, as are all good soldiers.

Yet they arose above their fear and conquered the savage instinct of self-preservation as they hurled themselves into an arena of critical danger in order that the ideals which they embraced might be given opportunity to flourish anew in the good society that they would protect.

Thus, as we remember them, we recall that they were men like us in their hopes, their fears, their inner feelings and their outer expressions.

But we gather in this beautiful outdoor sanctuary this afternoon to HONOR as much as to remember. It is well for us to recall human characteristics of these brave men, but it is fitting that our remembrance be lifted into HONOR and all that this word conveys.

This MEMORIAL SANCTUARY is a symbol of the honor we hold for these heroes. It is an appropriate symbol which has incorporated a portion of land hitherto unused and set it aside following loving acts of reclamation and decoration. All of the island has a certain quietness and peace bespeaking the reward that belongs to those who die for their country and its freedom, but it is also clearly in the view

of the passer-by, inspiring appreciation in the thoughtful heart.

We, of Indian River County, wish never to forget the events in which these men figured so nobly. We would desire that our minds ever retain the essence of history that caused them to give of themselves and that from our consciousness would never be erased the knowledge that these fine men each donated several decades of their existence on earth that our country might continue as a community of free people under God.

Thus we remember and honor this day these steadfast patriots whose destiny it was to be cut short in the spring-time of life and whose sacrifice cannot be fully comprehended by their fellows.

III. But REMEMBRANCE and HONOR is not enough! More is required if our remembrance is sincere and our honor productive. We must have RESOLUTION.

Now RESOLVE is an overworked word, used carelessly by politicians, flippantly by preachers and unthinkingly by most others. As a case in point consider our New Year's Resolutions which we eagerly anticipate breaking at first opportunity. Most RESOLUTION is of the made or break variety.

And yet it is the only word that adequately describes the proper outgrowth of our remembrances and our attempts to honor.

What then should be our resolve?

First, we should make our way from this place resolved to witness anew to the strength, the courage, and the manifest dignity of the American fighting man. He is the greatest soldier the world has known and he is great because he is rooted in a system of government which prefers not to coerce but to persuade; not to command, but to challenge; not to degrade, but to enhance the individual.

May we attest this strongly to those who assert that as a nation we have grown soft and that our youth are no longer capable of such action as typified our beloved dead of recent wars.

Let us resolve that the fruits gained by their efforts be not left rotting on the tree, but that the democratic institution be fertilized and pruned and nurtured by our attention and concern that the fruit grow larger and sweeter with each successive generation instead of withering away.

May we resolve that as a genuine memorial to these valiant warriors that we stop romanticizing war to an estate of which it is entirely unworthy. America has never fought an offensive war; she has taken arms only in defense. The brave men of our armed forces did a task that had to be exhausted. Had other alternatives been available they would have been used.

May our day be one in which loose talk of war as a means of threatening the adversary be eliminated and all armament rattling cease. Let us remain strong, but let us use our strength only for protection, not for intimidation. As we do this, we move in the spirit of those who truly felt that they fought to end all fighting.

Lastly, let us resolve that future generations shall not forget the sacrifices made by these men but will be told the story of a supreme self-denial practiced by those who cherished an ideal to the point of giving back to God the brass He had bestowed.

These remembrances, these honorings, these resolutions, are not easy to come by in this day of conflicting ideologies, bewildering strategems and uncertain convictions. In the maddening pace of securing a livelihood and combatting the forces that fatigue the spirit, it is not an easy thing to stop and to reflect.

But this posture must be initiated and developed.

With God's help and with the use of our best intuition, these honored dead may indeed repose peacefully in the certain knowledge that from their sacrifice grew a community who in gratitude and remembrance secured anew the peace for which they paid full measure.

Lord of our Fathers, hear our prayer

For those who paid the price

Our stalwart youth, so brave and fair

Who made the sacrifice.

We pray that in the hearts of man

The flame of hate may die;

That clouds of war no more shall span

Our nation's peaceful sky.

Lord of our Fathers, hear our prayer

For youth now free and gay;

We pray that You may ever spare

Them from the awful fray.

AMEN.

Indian Republic member of Youth The accepted annual end in Repre ty's club cluded queline Beach. Dunes was inf Young convent 1965.