

To the Catholic
serviceman
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**To the
Catholic
Serviceman**



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Neo-Eboraci, die 19 Decembris, 1944

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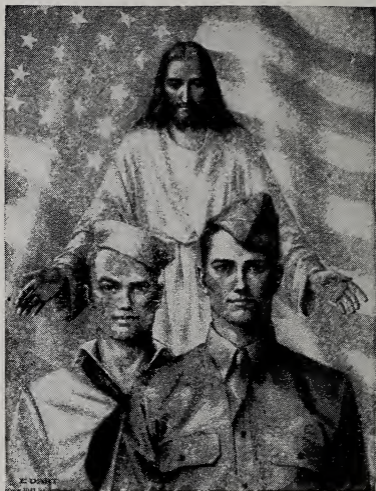
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Delegatus Castrensis

Neo-Eboraci, die 20 Decembris, 1944

To the Catholic Serviceman



**SPECIAL PRIVILEGES
GRANTED TO YOU DURING
YOUR SERVICE IN THE
ARMED FORCES**



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The Divine Protector

Deacidified

To the Catholic Serviceman

INTRODUCTION

The New Recruit will at first find life in the Armed Forces a little different from that to which he has been accustomed. He will not be long, however, in observing that the fundamentals of life remain the same. Values and measures do not change. As this is true for the physical and mental, it is equally true for the spiritual. Your code of ethics, your rule of good and bad conduct remains the same. Resolve, therefore, from the beginning, to adhere to the dictates of your conscience as you have been instructed in youth. No order or command is likely to be given to do anything contrary to good conscience.

It would be well for you to inquire as to the whereabouts of your Catholic Chaplain, so that you may know where to find him should the need arise. At the same time, find out the hours and the place of Mass in your camp or in the neighboring communities. You are expected to attend Mass on Sundays and Holydays of Obligation.

Frequent the Sacraments so that you may receive the necessary graces to lead a good Christian life.

At all times be a gentleman. Be a good patriot. Be a good Catholic.

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The following are the special privileges granted to you during your service in the Armed Forces. They are granted by the Church for your benefit. Take advantage of them.

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I

FAST AND ABSTINENCE

While on active service all members of the Armed Forces are dispensed from the Church law of fast and absti-

nence except on the following days: Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, Holy Saturday until noon, and the Vigil of Christmas except when it falls on Sunday.

This dispensation is personal and applies to the individual wherever he may be. It also applies to his wife, children, parents and servants if he is habitually residing with them, whether on or off the post.

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II

EVENING MASSES

In order to make it less difficult for the members of the Armed Forces to fulfill their obligation of assisting at Mass on Sundays and Holydays of Obligation, and at the same time to encourage daily Mass and Communion, the Holy See has granted extraordinary privileges for the celebration of Masses and the reception of Holy Communion.

1. A priest may celebrate three Masses on Sundays and two on weekdays whenever the need is manifest.

2. Mass may be celebrated in the afternoon until 7:30 P. M. whenever such would be to the advantage of the Service personnel because of their inability to attend Mass in the morning.

3. Holy Communion may be received at any time of the day or night. Though it is preferable to receive during Mass, any reasonable cause would justify the reception of Holy Communion at other hours. This is the universal law of the Church and applies to civilian and Service personnel. However, there is a special dispensation from the fast for afternoon Communion which applies to members of the Armed Forces exclusively.

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III

COMMUNION FAST

In order to encourage and facilitate the frequent reception of the Blessed Sacrament in Holy Communion, the law of Eucharistic fast has been greatly mitigated for the members of the Armed Forces. The following are the

presently existing regulations for fast before the reception of Holy Communion.

1. To receive Communion in the morning hours until 12:00 noon, one must normally observe the ordinary fast, namely abstaining from all food and drink from midnight of the previous day.

Exception to this rule:

- a. What is known as "The Defense-Workers' Privilege" allows a member of the Armed Forces who has been on active guard duty or other work after midnight to receive Holy Communion during the day, after a fast of four hours from solid food and of one hour from liquids. Civilian subjects of the Military Vicar who are "Defense Workers" may use this privilege.
- b. Service personnel may take liquid nourishment before Holy Communion whenever in the judgment of their Chaplain cli-

matic conditions, physical weakness or other peculiar circumstances make the usual fast too difficult. There is no time specified, but it is recommended that one endeavor out of reverence to fast at least one hour before receiving.

- c. The Chaplain may permit the sick to take medicine and liquids before receiving Holy Communion. They may receive daily if they so desire.

2. The Service personnel who receive Communion after 12:00 noon may make use of the mitigated Eucharistic fast. They must, however, be fasting from solids for four hours and from liquids for one hour before receiving.

This privilege applies only to the Armed Forces personnel strictly so called, not to civilians even though they work and reside on Service posts.

In all the above-mentioned instances under numbers 1 and 2, it is to be noted that:

1. It is required that one abstain from alcoholic beverages from 12:00 midnight of the preceding day.

2. The privileges apply to weekdays as well as Sundays and Holydays.

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IV

HOLY VIATICUM

While in dangerous waters, in the battle zone and where there is danger of enemy attack without warning, one may receive the Blessed Sacrament in the form of Holy Viaticum every day, and at any time of the day.

There is no fast required before the reception of Holy Viaticum.

There is an obligation on all Catholics to receive Holy Viaticum when their lives are endangered. Hence it is wise to avail oneself of this opportunity where and when it is possible. One must, however, have the proper dispositions of soul.

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V

EASTER DUTY

All Catholics are obliged to receive Holy Communion at least once a year, and that during the Easter time. In the United States the time specified for the fulfillment of this obligation extends from the First Sunday in Lent to Trinity Sunday. A Chaplain, however, may permit members of the Armed Forces to fulfill this obligation at any time during the year.

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VI

GENERAL ABSOLUTION

When it is impossible for a priest to hear the confessions of all penitents individually, immediately before going into battle or while in battle, as well as when enemy attack is imminent on land or sea, the Church has granted to her priests the faculty to absolve large groups of individuals with a general absolution without oral confession. It

is wrong, however, for one who has sinned mortally and who has a chance of going to confession, deliberately to put it off and wait until such time as a general absolution will be given.

In order that absolution be effective when general absolution is given, several conditions must be fulfilled, to wit:

1. The penitent must be **morally present**; that is to say, he must be within a reasonable distance of the priest.

2. The penitent must **manifest his Act of Contrition in some external way**, if possible, as for instance by striking his breast.

3. The penitent must be **truly sorry for his sins** and have a firm purpose of amendment, which must include the intention of avoiding future occasions of sin, as well as the intention of making restitution in matters of justice.

4. If the penitent has any mortal sins on his soul, he still has the obligation of confessing these in his next confession. At the time of the

general absolution the penitent must have the intention of doing this.

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VII

HOLYDAYS

OF OBLIGATION

Holydays of Obligation are the days of the year on which Catholics are obliged to assist at Mass under pain of mortal sin. They are the following in the United States:

All Sundays of the year.

New Year's Day, January 1.

Ascension Thursday.

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, August 15.

All Saints' Day, November 1.

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, December 8.

Christmas, the Nativity of our Lord, December 25.

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VIII

MARRIAGE

The laws of the Church relative to marriage have not been altered for the members of the Armed Forces. The laws of the state in which a marriage is performed must be adhered to. Under certain circumstances, authorization from the Commanding Officer must be given and special arrangements made.

Consequently, if you intend to enter into matrimony while in the service, make it a point to contact your Chaplain so that he may have ample time to give proper instructions, and to obtain the documents required by Church and State prior to the marriage.

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IX CONFIRMATION AND FIRST COMMUNION

If for some reason you have not made your First Communion nor received the Sacrament of Confirmation, contact the Chaplain in your outfit. He will make all necessary arrangements to afford you the opportunity of receiving these Sacraments.

Prior to the reception of these Sacraments, some preparations and instructions are required. It will also be necessary to obtain certain documents. See the Chaplain, therefore, at your earliest convenience.

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X

VOCATIONS

TO THE PRIESTHOOD

AND TO RELIGIOUS LIFE

There are in the Armed Forces a number of young men who are anxious to enter the Seminary to study for the Priesthood or to enter religious life as Brothers. The call to serve your country may have upset your plans or interfered with your studies. If it is your desire to begin or continue in these studies after your discharge from the Service, it would be well to explain this intention to your Chaplain. He may be able to advise you and assist you. Moreover, he will thus be in a better position to give you the necessary letters of recommendation required upon your entry into the Seminary.

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XI

WORK ON SUNDAYS AND HOLYDAYS

The sanctification of Sundays and Holydays of Obligation requires among other things that we refrain from all unnecessary servile work. In the Armed Forces you will find that work is reduced to a minimum on most of these days. However, there are certain types of work that must be done, and there are certain conditions under which no work is unimportant. Your conscience should be entirely at ease, therefore, in performing any duty that may be requested of you on these days.

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**WHILE SERVING YOUR COUNTRY
DO NOT NEGLECT THE
SERVICE OF GOD**

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