



Jubilee 2025



Jubilee of Armed Forces, Police and Security Personnel

8 – 9 February 2025

This weekend, we give thanks for and celebrate all those who serve and protect our country and communities, whether in the armed forces, law enforcement, or security services. We honour the brave men and women who have committed themselves to this noble duty, often putting themselves at risk in the name of justice, honour, and peace.

We remember their sacrifices, the challenges they face, and the unwavering dedication that drives them to serve others. May we be inspired by their courage and selflessness, and may we continue to work towards a safer, more just world for all.

Prayers

Example prayers of the faithful

For members of the Armed Forces, Police, and Security personnel: May they follow the example of Cornelius the Centurion—a courageous soldier, a just and pious man, who received baptism after meeting Peter and brought with him his soldiers and household (cf. Acts 10:1-48). May they be ready to bear witness to the Gospel and the Cross, remaining faithful to Christ by defending "justice and peace." **E te Ariki ...**

We pray for their families, that they may be filled with strength, resilience, and peace, supporting their loved ones through their vital service. Grant them patience, hope, and unity, especially during times of separation and hardship. **E te Ariki...**

Other prayers on the theme of Armed Forces, Police and Security Personnel

God of peace, God of strength, we stand before the cross where Jesus laid down his life for others—the cross, a sign of sacrifice and the promise of resurrection.

We honour in prayer all those who have given their lives to protect and serve others, especially the men and women of our armed forces, police, and security personnel.

We remember those from our own community, and the loved ones of those gathered here. May their sacrifice inspire us to pursue peace in our own land and throughout the world.





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Grant comfort to all who grieve the loss of loved ones through conflict and service. May they find hope in the new life won for us by Jesus, your Son. Amen.

O Almighty God, whose great power and eternal wisdom embrace the universe, watch over all who serve in the armed forces, law enforcement, and security services.

Father in Heaven, please give them the strength, courage, and perseverance to endure the unjust condemnation, dangers, and physical challenges to which they are at times subjected.

We commend them to your loving care, as their duty is often dangerous. Dear God, grant these brave individuals your almighty protection, and unite them safely with their families after their duty has ended. Amen.

Prayer to Saint Michael Archangel

Saint Michael, the Archangel, defend us in battle,
Be our protection against the malice and snares of the devil.
We humbly beseech God to command him,
And do thou, O prince of the heavenly host,
By the divine power thrust into hell Satan
And the other evil spirits who roam through the world
Seeking the ruin of souls.

St. Patrick's Breastplate

May the strength of God guide me this day, and may his power preserve me.
May the wisdom of God instruct me; the eye of God watch over me; the ear of God hear me; the word of God give sweetness to my speech; the hand of God defend me; and may I follow the way of God.

Christ be with me, Christ before me,
Christ be after me, Christ within me,
Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ at my right hand, Christ at my left,
Christ in the fort, Christ in the chariot,
Christ in the ship,
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of every man who speaks to me.





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Christ in every eye that sees me.
Christ in every ear that hears me.

From <https://www.xavier.edu/jesuitresource/online-resources/prayer-index/for-those-who-server-and-protect>

Reflection on the Jubilee of Armed Forces, Police and Security Personnel

Read the following reflection out during Mass/within your faith communities over the weekend of 8 – 9 February 2025, or distribute for personal reflection.

We read in Matthew's Gospel, chapter 7, about a Roman centurion asking Jesus for help to heal his servant. When Jesus says he will come, the centurion replies that he is not worthy for Jesus to enter his house, but he believes that all Jesus has to do is say the word, and his servant will be healed. Jesus is amazed by the centurion's faith and says he has not found anyone in Israel with such great faith.

When one thinks about the armed forces, one often thinks of war and wonders how acts of war can be reconciled with the love of God. The centurion showed how he could serve as a soldier and still have faith, as well as hope and charity. During World War II, Malta became one of the most besieged and bombed places. Initially, Malta's air defence relied on three outdated Gloster Gladiator aircraft, which the people of Malta nicknamed Faith, Hope, and Charity. Despite the ugliness of war, servicemen and women hold onto these virtues to help them navigate the difficulties of service life.

A few years ago, I was privileged to take a group of veterans back to Monte Cassino—a bloody campaign of four battles before the Allies finally won. It cost the lives of over 50,000 servicemen from both sides, and who knows how many civilians. While I was standing in the square of the city of Cassino at the conclusion of our visit, marked by a parade and a kapa haka, a small Italian gentleman came up to me, pointed to the flash on my uniform, and asked, "New Zealand?" When I nodded, he became quite excited and started speaking in Italian. I took him to our interpreter to understand what he was trying to tell me.

It turned out he had been a young boy in Cassino at the time of the battles. His house had been destroyed and his parents killed. He was hiding in the rubble when a New Zealand soldier found him, looked after him, brought him food, and helped him find relatives who then took care of him. After all those years, he wanted to express his thanks to the New Zealand soldier.





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We don't know who that soldier was—in the words of the song, “old soldiers never die, they simply fade away!” However, amid the horrors of war, that soldier showed the virtues of faith, hope, and particularly charity.

Peter Hurley
Military Doctor

Suggestions for celebrating this Jubilee in your communities

- **Use the provided prayers of the faithful or write your own**
Craft prayers specifically for members of the armed forces, police, and security personnel, asking for God's protection, strength, and guidance. Pray for their families, the challenges they face, and for peace and justice to prevail in their service.
- **Host a special mass or prayer service for armed forces and security personnel**
Organise a Mass or prayer service dedicated to those who serve in the armed forces, police, and security fields. Include prayers for their safety, peace, and commitment to justice. Invite local servicemen and women, police officers, and security personnel to attend and participate.
- **Read the provided reflection during mass or in faith communities**
Share the provided reflection during Mass or community gatherings, highlighting the importance of service, sacrifice, and the protection of others. Additionally, provide printed copies of the reflection for private reflection throughout the week, allowing individuals to reflect on the significance of the work and the spiritual support needed for those who serve.
- **Hold a blessing of armed forces, police, and security personnel**
Offer a special blessing for those who serve in these roles, asking God to strengthen them, protect them in their duties, and guide them in promoting peace and safety. This could include a blessing during Mass or at a community event.
- **Host a memorial service for fallen service personnel**
Honour and remember those who have lost their lives while serving in the armed forces, police, and security services. Hold a memorial service with prayers for their souls and for the comfort of their families.
- **Collaborate with local security forces on community outreach**
Partner with local police, military, or security forces to engage in a community outreach project, such as a safety awareness campaign, charity drive, or neighbourhood event that brings the service personnel and the community together.

