



# CATHOLIC WAR VETERANS

OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, INC

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## 1<sup>ST</sup> Vice Commander's Program

TO: Commanders and First Vice Commanders, ALL Echelons

FROM: Benjamin Nunez, National First Vice Commander  
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SUBJECT: **2021 - 2022 NATIONAL FIRST VICE COMMANDER'S PROGRAM**

It is the responsibility of all First Vice Commanders to organize, conduct and coordinate Americanism and Catholic Action programs in their respective echelons. As you review the suggested programs below, you may find that it is difficult for one person to carry out all facets of the First Vice Commanders responsibilities. You might consider appointing committees to help you along the way, one for Americanism and one for Catholic Action. Regarding Catholic Action, your Chaplain could be invaluable in helping with suggestions and comments.

Because of the scope of your position, you are encouraged to rely on programs already established in your area. Don't abandon those activities that have proved successful in the past but do start new ones if you feel they will improve your program. In any event, it is important that you keep the National First Vice Commander advised of your actions. We may, in fact, want to incorporate some of your programs into the National Program.

### **AMERICANISM** (Section 2 on Report Form)

#### **1. PATRIOTISM**

It is obvious that as American History becomes less important in the classrooms of our nation's schools, patriotism and respect for our country have decreased. It should become a priority in all CWV activities, that we promote patriotism at every given opportunity. The only sure way to instruct and educate our citizens on this most important subject is to work within our individual communities. Observe our National holidays. Honor our flag and bring back that love and devotion to the United States of America that was so prevalent in bygone years.

#### **2. HONOR OUR FLAG**

We need to call attention of the citizens in our communities to the custom of displaying the flag whenever possible. Make them aware of the sacrifices made throughout our history in the name of that revered emblem. Call their attention to our cemeteries on Memorial Day, as a sea of red, white and blue flies over

the graves of those who served our country. As President Lincoln pointed out at Gettysburg, *“we can never forget those who gave that last full measure of devotion that we might live in a country that is free, independent and united.”*

On Flag Day, June 14, encourage all Echelons to promote the “Pause for the Pledge” at 7:00 p.m. on that date. Make certain that all groups assembled anywhere in your area, stop what they are doing and together recite the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag:

***“I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all.”***

NOTE: There should be NO pause between “one nation” and “under God” – it is all one phrase.

**HOLIDAYS ON WHICH IT IS SUGGESTED TO FLY  
OUR AMERICAN FLAG, 2021- 2022**

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|---|--|
| 1. Columbus Day   | Monday, October 11                         |
| 2. Veterans Day   | Thursday, November 11                      |
| 3. Thanksgiving Day   | Thursday, November 25                      |
| 4. Pearl Harbor Day   | Tuesday, December 7                        |
| 5. National CWV Day<br>(Feast of the Immaculate Conception) | Wednesday, December 8                      |
| 6. Christmas Day  | Saturday, December 25                      |
| 7. New Year's Day   | Saturday, January 1                        |
| 8. Martin Luther King Day                                   | Monday, January 17                         |
| 9. St. Sebastian Day<br>St. Agnes Day                       | Thursday, January 20<br>Friday, January 21 |
| 10. President's Day   | Monday, February 21                        |
| 11. Easter  | Sunday, April 17                           |
| 12. National CWV Founders Day<br>(Msgr. Edward J. Higgins)  | Thursday, May 19                           |
| 13. Armed Forces Day  | Saturday, May 21                           |
| 14. Memorial Day  | Monday, May 30                             |
| 15. D-Day   | Monday, June 6                             |
| 16. Flag Day  | Tuesday, June 14                           |
| 17. Independence Day  | Monday, July 4                             |
| 18. Labor Day   | Monday, September 5                        |
| 19. Remembrance/Patriot Day                                 | Sunday, September 11                       |

**3. ELECTIONS (THE RIGHT TO VOTE)**

The most important right guaranteed by our Constitution is the right to vote. As members of the Catholic War Veterans, before we exercise that right, we must take into consideration our obligations as a Catholic, a veteran and an American. Many of the issues today are completely opposed to the teachings of our faith. All these issues must be carefully considered before casting our ballot. For those who feel that one vote doesn't matter, just look at the closeness of so many of our recent elections. It is imperative that we all vote, but only after judging all the issues, particularly those that affect our moral principles.

We should encourage our members not only to vote themselves but to seek out like-minded individuals and see that they, too, get to the polls. As we have seen in our last national election, younger people are getting more and more involved in the voting process. While this is good, we cannot allow that movement to keep those of us who might disagree with their ideas away on Election Day. Make sure we help "get out the vote" not only in national elections but also in our state and communities.

**4. COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES**

As indicated earlier, promoting activities that center on Patriotism and Love of Country are important to all our citizens. Get involved in organizing and carrying out anything that calls attention to what is good about your community. Let your voice be heard politically, socially and spiritually. It is important that we share our life experiences with the younger generation. Programs where we can meet with and talk to young people can help them understand what our history is all about. Sharing our personal histories have made our children realize not only how great our country really is, but what their community, region, and state have contributed to the growth of the country.

**5. SECULARISM**

Two of the greatest threats to America today, in addition to the war on terrorism, are pornography and substance abuse. As mankind continues to turn away from God, it becomes evident that these two issues drive down the spirit of America. It takes an entire community to come together and battle both evils. We, as Catholics, should be in the forefront of that fight.

**6. SUPPORT OUR TROOPS**

The war on terrorism continues. We must support those brave Americans who remain in harm's way. Pray for them every day and for their families here at home. Join the efforts of the local communities, groups and individuals who send various items to them to provide some semblance of normality. Care packages to designate units, phone calling cards, etc. bring some semblance of home. Have your local posts check with your local veteran service organizations for units which might benefit from your thoughtfulness.

## CATHOLIC ACTION

(Section 1 on Report Form)

As a veterans' organization, we are unique because of our relationship with the Catholic Church. We are the only Catholic organization to be granted a Federal Congressional Charter and one of just a few veterans' groups to enjoy that recognition.

### 1. SUPPORT OF RELIGIOUS AND MILITARY VOCATIONS

We need more priests as chaplains to administer to members of the Armed Forces. Our Bishop Protector needs the support of the Catholic War Veterans. We can assist both monetarily and with continued prayer.

### 2. SPIRITUAL BOUQUET

The 2020 - 2021 annual CWV Spiritual Bouquet campaign began on July 1, 2020 and ends on June 30, 2021. This is one of the most important activities of the Catholic War Veterans as we pay homage to the Vicar of Christ on Earth, our Spiritual Father, Pope Francis. It should include Masses, Holy Communions, Rosaries, Stations of the Cross, Acts of Charity, Eucharistic Visits and Adoration, Fasts, Mortifications, Aspirations, and recitation of the Divine Mercy Chaplet.

Use the Echelon Report Form included with this program and attach it to your semi-annual 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander's report. Be sure that each member has access to a copy of the Individual Tally Sheet so that all your efforts can be recorded and added to the grand total in June. Auxiliary participation will be included in the final report.

### 3. CANONIZATION OF FATHER EMIL KAPAUN

Father Kapaun was an Army Chaplain during both World War II and the Korean War. Because of the exceptional life he led and the outstanding service he gave not only to our men in the field but to his fellow POWs in Korea, he is being considered for canonization. One of his most prominent supporters is our Bishop Protector Emeritus, the Most Reverend Richard B. Higgins, who himself is a former Chaplain in the United States Air Force. Make every attempt to promote this movement in your post and among your fellow parishioners. If you do not possess a copy of the Father Kapaun prayer card, there is one available on the internet ([www.frkapaun.org](http://www.frkapaun.org)). This prayer should be recited at every post meeting.

### 4. CANONIZATION OF FATHER VINCENT CAPODANNO

Father Vincent R. Capodanno, M.M., was a Maryknoll priest and U.S. Navy Chaplain assigned to the U.S. Marine Corps in South Vietnam during the Vietnam War. He was on his second tour of duty in Vietnam when he was killed in action on 4 September 1967 while serving with a Marine infantry unit as he ministered to the wounded and dying during a fierce battle with North Vietnamese Army forces. For his actions he was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Fr. Capodanno is currently a Servant of God as his case for canonization is being considered. His cause for canonization was advanced by the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA, which celebrates a Memorial Mass for him every year on the anniversary of his death, on or about 4 September. As with Fr. Kapaun, make every attempt to promote his cause at your Post and in your parish. Visit <http://www.capodannoguild.org/> to learn more.

**5. KEEP CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS**

We need to celebrate the birth of Christ during the holiday season. So many times, the expression “Season’s Greetings” or “Happy Holidays” is used Christmas is all about Christ.

The Catholic War Veterans have traditionally turned their efforts toward emphasizing the name of Jesus Christ, our Savior, in all that has to do with the Christmas Season. Use Christmas cards, stamps and envelope stickers with a religious theme and get your post involved in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Vice Commander’s “Keep Christ in Christmas” program within the schools. Encourage your local merchants to display Christmas drawings from the school children and highlight the birth of Jesus Christ.

**6. THE ROSARY PROGRAM**

Under this part of the National Catholic Action Programs, Posts collect new and used Rosaries and send them to the National 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander. All Rosaries collected will be sent to parishes in India and elsewhere who have great need of them. Please forward these through Echelons.

This is Catholic Action at its best! As we engage in this effort, let us remember that the year 2017 marked the Fatima Centennial. One hundred years ago, in 1917, Our Lady of Fatima appeared to three shepherd children in Fatima, Portugal, and asked them to spread the practice of praying the Rosary for the conversion of sinners. Our Lady’s message continues to be relevant as we deepen our own devotion to the Rosary.

**7. ROSARY DECADE-A-DAY**

Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception has been designated the patroness of the United States. We wish to encourage our membership to take time each day to say a decade of the Rosary. A Decade-a-Day will serve as our petition in seeking the Blessed Mother’s intercession in the various world crisis situations. Start a monthly Rosary Night at your post and invite and encourage all to attend. We should say a decade before our Masses and before all our formal meetings.

**8. MEMORIAL PROGRAM**

*“It is a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead.”* All echelons are encouraged to hold at least one Memorial Program during the year. These observances can take many different forms, but the beauty and dignity of our Ritual should always be observed. All our members who have passed away during a given year should be remembered and their names read at the time of these programs.

**9. DEATH OF A MEMBER**

Every individual who served in the Armed Forces of the United States is entitled to “Military Honors” at the time of his or her death. Local custom, developed over a period of years, has played a major role in the manner these “honors” are rendered. It is imperative that we, as Catholic War Veterans, recognize our veteran’s passing in some way. Whether it is at a funeral parlor, church or cemetery, a proper tribute should be given. As soon as we learn of the death of a member, it is important that we discuss the Memorial Services with the family and funeral director and then notify our members of the time and place of the memorial service. The wishes of the deceased’s family must always be respected. Update the database indicating his or her death is necessary.

“TAPS” – A digital rendition of ‘TAPS’ is available and can be found on the following website, [www.tapsbugler.com](http://www.tapsbugler.com). An electronic bugle is available with an electronic insert that provides the play along of “Taps” as rendered at Arlington National Cemetery. For additional information visit the following website: [www.ceremonialbugle.com](http://www.ceremonialbugle.com).

**10. PRO-LIFE**

We must continue our attempts to overturn the 1973 Roe vs. Wade decision by the United States Supreme Court and appeal nationwide for support of all in this endeavor.

Pro-Choice advocates have allegedly declared war on all state legislators supporting Pro-Life.

Department 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commanders must follow the legislative process in their respective states relative to abortion legislation. When such bills are submitted, department leaders should secure copies of the proposals, determine which committees in the State Senate and House will consider the bill and then take a strong Pro-Life stand supporting those legislators who advocate Pro-Life. Continue to send letters and emails to your representatives regarding your opposition to abortion.

The 44th Annual March for Life is scheduled for Friday, January 29, 2021 in Washington, DC on the National Mall. Consider chartering a bus to participate in the March. In the past many CWV members have traveled to the March with a parish group of the Knights of Columbus.

Form a group to recite the Chaplet of Divine Mercy for an end to abortion. This is appropriate after a Mass on Sunday mornings.

**11. CORPORATE COMMUNION MASSES AND BREAKFASTS**

Corporate Communion Masses have traditionally been held on the fifth Sunday of the month with the idea that all CWV units throughout the country would be attending mass and receiving Holy Communion on the same day as an act of solidarity nationwide. Breakfast after Mass can be a family affair and a way to renew old members.

We encourage State Departments to schedule an annual Communion Mass and Breakfast in a central location or at the time of your annual convention. These events serve our spiritual needs and offer an opportunity to renew old friendships and make new acquaintances.

**12. LENTEN SEASON**

The 2022 Lenten Season commences on Ash Wednesday, March 2, 2022. Good Friday is April 15, 2022. These dates should be published in newsletters and bulletins to remind your membership of this season of penance.

## REPORTS

Posts are responsible for submitting two (2) Semi-Annual Post Activities reports. First Vice Commanders should assist in filling out the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander Programs portion of the Report Form. Posts wishing to augment their reports with additional detail may do so, e.g. description of each Catholic Action or Americanism Activity that your Post sponsored.

The Semi-Annual Report Form can be filled out online through your Post database.

A printed hard copy of these Reports should be sent **directly to EVERY higher echelon** - one copy each to Chapter, one to Department and one to National for each Reporting Period. Reports can be sent as an e-mail attachment.

Please time your reports to arrive at each higher Echelon as follows:

**First Report** (covers July 1 - December 31)

Post Report to all applicable upper Echelons (Chapter, Dept and National)

DUE NO LATER than January 20

**Second Report** (Covers January 1- June 30)

Post Report to all applicable upper Echelons (Chapter, Dept and National)

DUE NO LATER than July 20

Department and Chapter 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commanders should also forward a copy of the Annual 1VC Report rendered to delegates at their Convention, immediately thereafter, to the National 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander:

Benjamin Nunez, National 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander  
3625 Hamilton Ave  
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Your comments and suggestions from all echelons are most welcome. Together we can make a difference!