

May 30, 2021

*Every Day is Memorial Day*

Dear Friends,

Memorial Day isn't just a weekend of partying that kicks off the summer, as some less enlightened people may believe it to be, it is a day of sacred and painful remembrance. Memorial Day's origins are not clearly known, but it emerged as a day to decorate the graves of the multitude of soldiers who died in the Civil War. After the mass slaughter that took place in World War II, President Harry Truman declared Memorial Day to be "a day of prayer for permanent peace." In blessed gratitude for their sacrifice, we remember and pray for the brave men and women who gave their lives for our country and for peace, but we also can't help but to remember all our own loved ones who have gone before us.

For those who are grieving, every day is memorial day.

It's interesting how one's perspective can radically change after a significant loss; what once seemed to be most important and valuable can't hold a candle to our memories, which are clearly now our greatest investment. Our memories have become our most sacred treasure. "Memory is a way of holding on to the things you love, the things you are, the things you never want to lose." (from *The Wonder Years*)

It's gloomy, chilly, and lonely on this Memorial Day weekend, and the weather seems to reflect what so many people are feeling inside. When most people are itching to get out and celebrate the end of lockdown and the beginning of summer, others are perfectly comfortable getting cozy with a blanket and pillow on the couch that has sustained them these many months of pandemic-laden grief. This weather makes me feel like I am back in Ireland, where once I heard of a tombstone there that read: "*Death leaves a heartache no one can heal, love leaves memories no one can steal.*" Yes, some folks are grieving good weather this weekend, but others may not be so upset with the way it all turned out. I had to light a fire to stay warm while writing this, which is weird because it's almost June, but on the other hand, it felt deliciously comfortable. Perhaps we can all try to throw a log onto that fire by reaching deep inside our own

treasure chests to pull out a memory that warms our heart; one that lifts our spirit in some way; a loving memory that may even bring a smile to our face or peaceful gratitude to our broken heart. So if people say, "Happy Memorial Day," perhaps try to think of it as "happy memories day." The good ones are so important right now. They are our greatest treasure.

Finally, let us all pray for permanent peace today and every day. Let us pray together: *God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.*

Peace and Serenity,

Kevin