

Hello, this is Tom Cookman with a Community Comment.

Last Tuesday I attendd the funeral of my friend Mark Sanchez. Mark and I went to Worthington, Zane and Eureka High Schools together. Mark was proud of his military service and spent time in Iraq during Desert Storm. At his funeral, and every funeral of someone who gave a portion of their lives defending our great country, the casket is covered with the American Flag. The Military Honor Guard meticulously folds the flag thirteen times and this is what is read for each fold.

The first fold of our flag is a symbol of life.

The second fold is a symbol of our belief in the eternal life.

The third fold is made in honor and remembrance of the veteran departing our ranks who gave a portion of his or her life for the defense of our country to attain peace throughout the world.

The fourth fold represents our weaker nature, for as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace as well as in times of war for His divine guidance.

The fifth fold is a tribute to our country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, "Our country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right; but it is still our country, right or wrong."

The sixth fold is for where our hearts lie. It is with our heart that we 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.

The seventh fold is a tribute to our Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that we protect our country and our flag against all her enemies, whether they be found within or without the boundries of our republic.

The eighth fold is a tribute to the one who entered in to the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day, and to honor mother, for whom it flies on Mother's Day.

The ninth fold is a tribute to womanhood; for it has been through their faith, love, loyalty and devotion that the character of the men and women who have made this country great have been molded.

The tenth fold is a tribute to father, for he, too, has given his sons and daughters for the defense of our country since they were first born.

The eleventh fold, in the eyes of a Hebrew citizen, represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon, and glorifies, in their eyes, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

The twelfth fold, in the eyes of a Christian citizen, represents an embelem of eternity and glorifies, in their eyes, God the Father, the s Son, and the Holy Ghost. When the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost, reminding us of our national motto, "In God we Trust."

The flag is then given to the widow or family member after three of the spent casings from the 21 gun salute are inserted into the folded flag. If you think our country isn't a Christian country, you need to think again. Freedom of religion is a freedom to worship,

it is not freedom from worship. Mark Sanchez was a Patriot and a hero, may he rest in peace.

This has been Tom Cookman with a Community Comment