

# Opinion

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THE GREENEVILLE SUN

EDITOR: MICHAEL S. RENEAU

## Yes, Throw A Parade

The Pentagon has confirmed that it is in the preliminary stages of planning a military parade down Pennsylvania Avenue — one of President Donald Trump's fondest desires.



RICH LOWRY

Trump was, understandably, impressed in a visit to France last July by the pageantry of the Bastille Day parade. The parade dates back to the 1880s. Nothing the United States comes up with will match its resonance or its beloved, unifying nature.

Trump's motivation for ordering up a parade anyway is pretty obvious. He likes big, brassy displays, and he gets a kick out of being the commander in chief of the most impressive military on the planet.

The president's impulse itself shouldn't be enough to roll the armor down Pennsylvania Avenue, but we don't lack for reasons to honor our military. The Pentagon has already floated the idea of a parade on Veterans Day to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I, an epic event by any standard. We're also overdue to honor on a large scale the sacrifice of our troops over the past 15 years in the war on terror.

Trump's critics sniff a dangerous authoritarianism afoot.

"We have a Napoleon in the making here," pronounced Rep. Jackie Speier. Of course, coming to power in a coup, literally crowning himself emperor of France and conquering a swath of Europe tell us much more about Napoleon's political character than any of his parades.

A columnist for the New York Daily News harrumphed that Trump "has no sense of American exceptionalism." It's odd to locate American exceptionalism not in the Bill of Rights or Declaration of Independence, but in the (relatively recent) absence of military parades.

It's not obvious when it became untoward or dangerous for the United States to hold military parades. Are we supposed to believe that the integrity of American character has depended on having no military parades since 1991, when there were big honking ones in Washington and New York to celebrate the end of the Gulf War?

The unsatisfactory outcomes of the Vietnam and Korean wars meant we didn't have parades to mark those conflicts (we should have). But it didn't occur to anyone that it was inappropriate or undemocratic to display military hardware.

During World War II, there were big military parades in New York City, and self-propelled howitzers drove by the New York Public Library. Dwight Eisenhower's first inaugural showcased an 85-ton atomic cannon, and the second, a Redstone ballistic missile. They broke out four nuclear missiles for JFK's inauguration, along with an impressive battery of tanks, armored vehicles and self-propelled howitzers.

It's true that leaders of Russia, China and North Korea exult in military parades. But it's not military parades that make these regimes dangerous.

The parade controversy is another sign that the place of patriotism in our national life, and what that patriotism should consist of, is a Trump-era flashpoint.

Trump's critics tend to think patriotism itself is atavistic, or that its locus should be only in our ideals. Trump's patriotism is more grounded, and insists that we are a nation, not just an abstraction.

This is why a military parade once in a while is a healthy thing: We should be proud, not just of our troops, but of our military as such. We should be proud of our strength. We should be proud of our weaponry, highly proficient machines fashioned by the most technically adept society the world has ever known.

Ideally, everyone would realize this. Once upon a time, we did. But now the best argument against Trump's parade is that it will become a cultural-war flashpoint and "the resistance" will try its utmost to ruin the affair. Just imagine a protester in a vagina hat in a Tiananmen Square-style standoff with an M1 Abrams tank.

Meanwhile, on July 14, the Bastille Day parade will in all likelihood come off once again without a hitch.

**The writer is editor of National Review and a political commentator. Copyright 2018, by King Features Syndicate.**

## BIBLE VERSE

### Read Luke 5:1-11

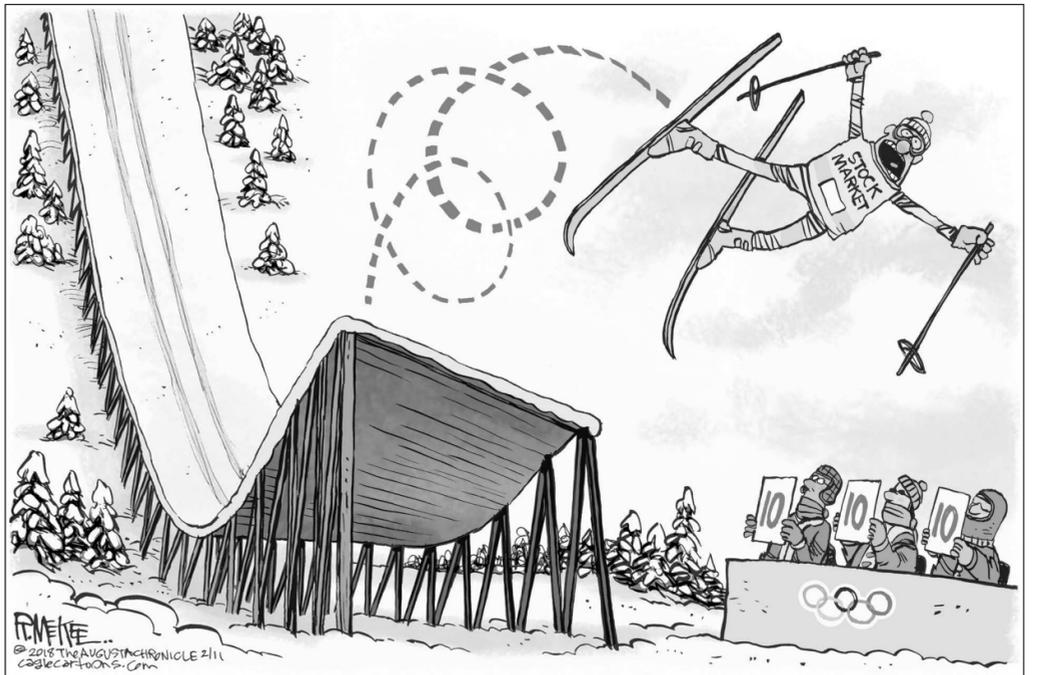
Simon answered, "Master, we've worked hard all night and haven't caught anything. But because You say so, I will let down the nets." — Luke 5:5 (NIV)

### Prayer:

God, our guide, give us hearts to listen and wisdom to discern Your calling to us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

### Thought For The Day

In what new way is God calling me to serve?



## It's Madness To Surrender In The War On Drugs

I recently read a commentary by someone who urged us to stop using the word "addict," because it somehow stigmatizes drug users. We were told not to talk about injection sites, because these city-sanctioned alternatives to the street are not just for heroin users. We were asked to limit the use of needle images, because research shows that they trigger a bad reaction in substance abuse sufferers.



CHRISTINE FLOWERS

The essay was well-intentioned, as most are. But after reading it, I got the distinct impression that I was lost in a passage from Lewis Carroll. I do not want my city to become Wonderland, a place where we change the facts to suit our own perception of what "should be." The express train toward normalization of drug use left the station years ago, and is now heading full throttle toward a place where it is heartless to deny a user clean, well-lit facilities in which to get high. We are urged to look at substance abuse as a disease, not an act of volition or even a crime, and exploit the normal human reservoir of compassion to create dangerous

situations for everyone who isn't sticking needles in their arms.

I've lost close family and friends to drugs, both legal and illicit, and I am aware that some people are hard-wired to become addicted to a drug on the first try, while others continue to partake of their preferred substance because it makes them feel good and not because they have a biological mandate. I do not need to walk the streets of North Philadelphia to know what it is to feel the pull of the "dragon." The word "addict" is not a one-size-fits-all label that denotes in neon lights "victim."

My father was dying from cancer in 1982. He was offered morphine in the final months, and realized that in exchange for that surcease of pain, he was losing himself in a haze of oblivion. This was a man with a mind that snapped and pulsed and fired with energy and intelligence, someone who is to this day remembered as the greatest litigator of his generation. He did not want to lose that thing that made him unique, and human. And so he deliberately limited the amount of morphine they wanted to give him, trading increased pain for clarity. I cannot blame others for making a different choice, but my father is an example that choices are possible.

And that is why I am tired of the victim narrative. Former Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell talks about how great the clean needle exchange was to stem the spread of AIDS and other diseases. That is not what Philadelphia is consid-

ering. Here, we are instead talking about letting people shoot up in public, and providing them with a comfortable area in which to do so. Heck, we've even decided to equip the sites with drugs that will bring the users back to life in cases of overdose. How kind, to give them an opportunity to live to OD another day.

If you think I'm bitter, I am. This is an attempt to force someone else's sense of morality on the city at large, and to meet the lowest common denominator. We've thrown up our hands in trying to keep drug users from using drugs, either because it seems futile or because we have brainwashed ourselves into believing that treating the symptoms are more important than treating the underlying disease. That presumes, of course, that all of those who would use these sites are in fact afflicted with an illness beyond their control.

In some quarters, even suggesting that this will harm the communities in which they will be located is considered cruel and uninformed.

Despite the fact that it's almost a fait accompli, I'm speaking out on behalf of those who think it's wrong, dangerous and a unique and utter madness.

Like the Hatter, in that other Wonderland.

**Christine Flowers is an attorney and a columnist for the Philadelphia Daily News. Her column is syndicated by Cagle Cartoons. Copyright 2018, Christine Flowers.**

## TODAY IN HISTORY

### BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Today is Monday, Feb. 12, the 43rd day of 2018. There are 322 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History: On Feb. 12, 1809, Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of the United States, was born in a log cabin in Hardin (now LaRue) County, Kentucky.

On this date: In 1554, Lady Jane Grey, who had claimed the throne of England for nine days, and her husband, Guildford Dudley, were beheaded after being condemned for high treason. In 1818, Chile officially proclaimed its independence, more than seven years after initially renouncing Spanish rule.

In 1909, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People was founded.

In 1914, groundbreaking took place for the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. (A year later on this date, the cornerstone was laid.)

In 1924, George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" premiered in New York.

In 1940, the radio play "The Adventures of Superman" debuted with Bud Collyer as the Man of Steel.

In 1959, the redesigned Lincoln penny — with an image of the Lincoln Memorial replacing two ears of wheat on the reverse side — went into circulation.

In 1963, a Northwest Orient Airlines Boeing 720 broke up during

severe turbulence and crashed into the Florida Everglades, killing all 43 people aboard.

In 1973, Operation Homecoming began as the first release of American prisoners of war from the Vietnam conflict took place.

In 1980, the FBI announced that about \$5,800 of the \$200,000 ransom paid to hijacker "D.B. Cooper" before he parachuted from a Northwest Orient jetliner in 1971 had been found by an 8-year-old boy on a riverbank of the Columbia River in Washington state.

In 1993, in a crime that shocked and outraged Britons, two 10-year-old boys lured 2-year-old James Bulger from his mother at a shopping mall near Liverpool, England, then beat him to death.

## BILLY GRAHAM

*Q: My faith today is probably about where it was 10 years ago —*

*not much stronger, not much weaker. I know I ought to be a better Christian, but I don't know how. What would you say to me? — Mrs. L.W.*

**A:** Just as children are meant to grow and become adults, so we are meant to grow and become "spiritual adults". Only then will we be able to resist wrong and do what's right. The Bible says, "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18).

The key is to understand that when we come to Christ and commit our lives to Him, we now have a personal relationship with God. Think of it: God is now our Heavenly Father, and we are now His

children! More than that, He has come to live within us by His Holy Spirit. God loves us, and by His death and resurrection Christ has torn down the barrier between us — a barrier caused by our sin. Now we are part of His family!

But how does any personal relationship grow and become stronger? The answer is clear: we have to spend time with someone — listening to them, sharing our interests and concerns with them, learning about them, and so forth. And the same is true with God. One way we do this is by listening to Him as He speaks to us through His Word, the Bible.

He also has given us the privilege of talking to Him in prayer. We grow

stronger too through our fellowship with other believers.

Make sure of your commitment to Christ. Then set aside time each day to read God's Word and pray. God's promise is true: "Come near to God and he will come near to you" (James 4:8).

(Send your queries to "My Answer," c/o Billy Graham, Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, 1 Billy Graham Parkway, Charlotte, NC 28201; call 1-(877) 2-GRAHAM, or visit the Web site for the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association: www.billygraham.org.)

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