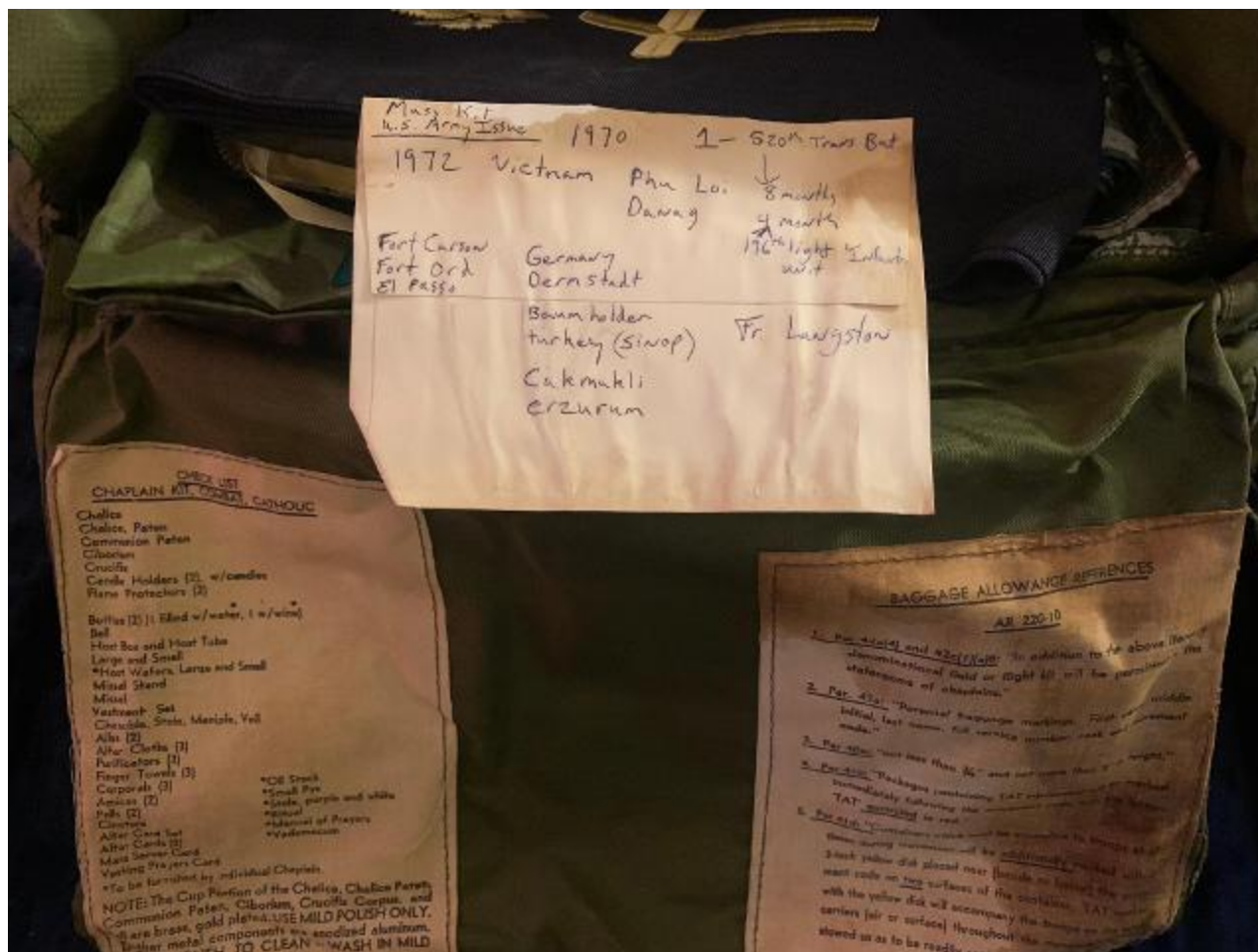


# The Story Of The Vietnam-Era Mass Kit, Father Marty Smith Hosts Another Veteran's Day Mass at St. Xavier Parish Church in Jerseyville

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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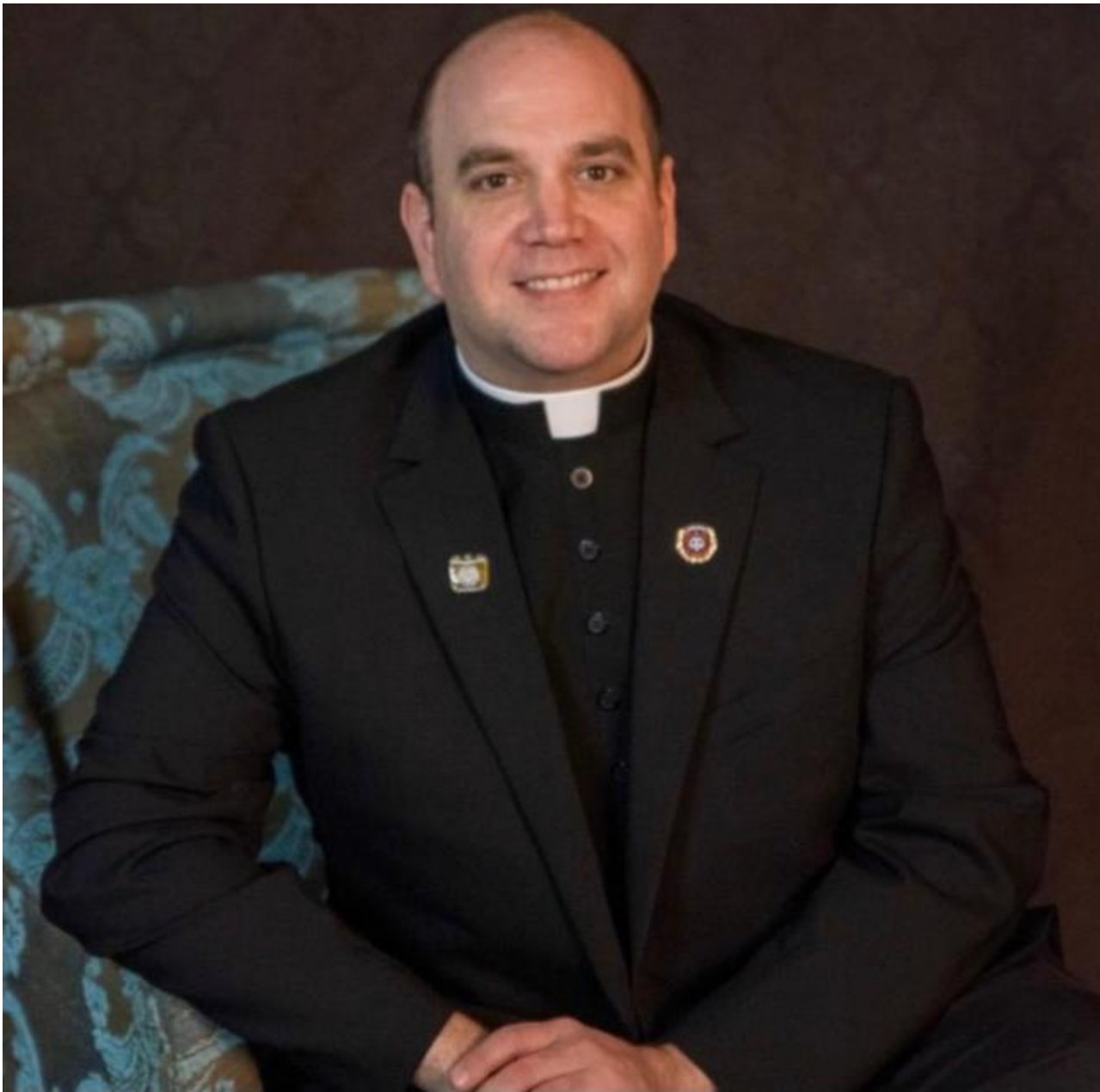
JERSEYVILLE - When someone sees the special Mass kit at a Veteran's Day Mass at St. Xavier Parish Church in Jerseyville, they need to understand the meaning behind it. The kit dates all the way back to the Vietnam War and the special relationship Father Marty Smith has with a Vietnam Chaplain who became a priest - Father Micheas Langston.



Father Micheas has had a huge influence on Father Marty and is one of the reasons Marty became a priest. Father Micheas was a chaplain in the Vietnam War and in 2019, marked 60 years in the priesthood. He is now a Saint Meinrad monk. Father Micheas gave Father Marty the Vietnam Era Mass kit and wanted him to find inspiration and continue to use it. The Mass Kit is one of Father Marty's most treasured possessions.

Father Marty will perform the Mass at 6:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 11, 2022, at the St. Xavier Parish with the kit.

“When I met Father Micheas in the service, I think I saw his life of service as a priest and it really resonated with me,” Father Marty said. “He stuck with me as one of the big figures in my life who inspired me to the life of service. When he gave me the Vietnam Era Mass Kit, it meant so much to me, that is why I will use it on Veterans Day.”



Veterans Day is a special day for all veterans, but it is especially special for Father Marty Smith, Pastor of St. Francis Xavier Parish in Jerseyville and St. Patrick in Grafton. Father Marty was a United States paratrooper for four years who served a tour in Iraq. Father Marty has a deep passion to care and honor all U.S. veterans, thus why he has the Veteran's Day Mass. All veterans will be recognized during the Mass and will stand up, according to their branch song.

Father Marty said all U.S. veterans and families are invited and will be recognized with special patriotic music provided by the St. Francis Xavier Chancel Choir and St. Francis /Holy Ghost School Youth Chorus. A reception will follow at the end of the Mass in the St. Francis Gymnasium.



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Father Marty said his experience in Iraq changed his perspective on what was important in life.

“I realized how precious and fragile human life is and how God calls us to serve one another,” he said. “I knew I wanted to have a life of service to God and it grew during my service time.

Veterans Day is of course such a special day for all veterans, Father Marty said.

“I think it is great to have a Mass to thank the veterans who can attend in person, but also to remember the veterans we had in our lives who can’t attend in person or aren’t now with us,” he added. “It is especially great for the ones who gave the ultimate gift of service with their life.”