

FOUR VOICES, ONE GOD

dedicated to the "Four Chaplains" of USAT "Dorchester"

RIP February 3, 1943

www.homeofheroes.com/brotherhood/chaplains.html

[1]

THERE'S AN AGING SHIP PAINTED NAVY GREY
LEAVING NEW YORK'S LIGHTS BEHIND
KNOWN FOR LUXURY IN HER YOUNGER DAYS
BUT THE YEARS HAVE NOT BEEN KIND
AS THE WAR DRAGS ON, SHE'S BEEN COMMANDEERED
TO FIGHT A DESPERATE FOE
SO A THOUSAND TROOPS CROWD HER RUSTED DECKS
BOUND FOR GREENLAND'S ENDLESS SNOW

(CHORUS AFTER VERSES 1-4)

FOUR VOICES, ONE GOD
ON THAT FEBRUARY NIGHT
WHEN YOU SHOW US, LORD, WHAT OUR DUTY IS
WE'LL TRY TO DO IT RIGHT!

(AFTER VERSES 5-8)

FOUR VOICES, ONE GOD
ON THAT FEBRUARY NIGHT
YOU'VE SHOWN TO US OUR DUTY, LORD
WE HOPE WE DID IT RIGHT!

[2]

AFTER TEN DAYS OUT IN THAT WINTRY SEA
SHE'S A BLOCK OF FROZEN STEEL
WHILE THE ESCORT VESSELS ON PATROL
KNOW THE U-BOAT THREAT IS REAL
"TORPEDO JUNCTION" IS DEAD AHEAD
BUT THE TROOPER'S COURSE IS SET
JUST A HUNDRED FIFTY MILES TO GO
AND THE DANGER'S NOT PAST YET

[3]

- "PLEASE BRING US SAFE THESE LAST FEW MILES
WE BESEECH THIS OF YOU, LORD ..."
BUT THE FATHER HAS A DIFFERENT PLAN
FOR HIS CHILDREN THERE ON BOARD
EIGHT BELLS HAVE STRUCK - WITH THE MIDNIGHT WATCH
STEERING ON THRU BLINDING SPRAY
DORCHESTER'S HIT, NOT ONCE BUT TWICE
WITH HER ESCORT FAR AWAY

[4]

THERE ARE FOUR BRAVE MEN ON THE STRICKEN SHIP
AS HER ICY END DRAWS NEAR
FOUR CHAPLAINS, FRIENDS, KINDLY MEN OF FAITH
AND THEY KNOW THEY MUST NOT FEAR
IN THE MIDST OF PAINFUL MISERY
MEN OF GOD MUST STAND AND FIGHT
ALL THE DEEP DESPAIR THAT WILL GRIP EACH HEART
FACING DEATH THAT TERRIBLE NIGHT

[5]

THEY WILL SHARE WHAT THEY HAVE WITH THE FRIGHTENED BOYS
WARM CLOTHES TO EASE THEIR PLIGHT
ONE WILL GIVE HIS ONLY GLOVES AWAY
- "I HAVE OTHERS - IT'S ALL RIGHT!"
THE LIVING HEAR A RALLYING-CRY
THE DYING HEAR A PRAYER
"DEAR GOD, BRING US ALL TO YOUR LIGHT AND PEACE"
ARE THE THOUGHTS THAT THE CHAPLAINS SHARE

[6]

BUT THE SHIP SOON ENDS HER FIGHT FOR LIFE
AND SURRENDERS TO THE WAVES
SIX HUNDRED SEVENTY MEN WILL DIE
ONLY ICE TO MARK THEIR GRAVES
WHILE ARM IN ARM ON THE SINKING DECK
HEAR FOUR CHAPLAINS SING AND PRAY
NOT ONE JACKET LEFT TO SAVE THEIR LIVES:
THEY'VE GIVEN THEM ALL AWAY!

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[7]

THO' MANY YEARS HAVE COME AND GONE
SINCE THAT DARK AND EVIL NIGHT
THE EXAMPLE OF THE CHAPLAINS SHINES
LIKE THE KINDEST HOLY LIGHT
NO GREATER LOVE, AS THE GOOD BOOK SAYS,
THAN TO MAKE THE SACRIFICE
THAT THESE FOUR MEN MADE FOR THE LADS THEY LOVED
IN THAT HELL OF FIRE AND ICE

[8]

IN HEAVEN'S KINGDOM NOW ENTHRONED
FOUR SAINTS REJOICE AS ONE
TRUE FRIENDS, THOUGH FOLLOWING DIFFERENT FAITHS,
BUT EACH MAN THE FATHER'S SON
REVERENDS POLING AND FOX, FATHER WASHINGTON,
RABBI GOODE, WE SING THANKS TO THEE
MAY YOUR LOVING ACT ON THAT FRIGHTFUL NIGHT
LIVE FOREVER IN MEMORY!

*-B.BLACK
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