

America

Our Heritage

A D-Day Prayer Is Answered

FDR's stirring words engraved on D.C. memorial.

BY PETER JEDICK

THE UNITED STATES WAS IN the midst of World War II 79 years ago when President Franklin Delano Roosevelt announced on national radio that U.S. troops were landing in Normandy, France, the beginning of the ground war against Nazi Germany.

FDR then asked his fellow Americans to join him in a prayer for our troops.

"Almighty God: Our sons, pride of our nation, this day have set upon a mighty endeavor," he said, "a struggle to preserve our republic, our religion, and our civilization, and to set free a suffering humanity."

It was June 6, 1944, and forever after it would be known as D-Day.

There is much more to that devotion, and fortunately for future generations the entire prayer has been etched in granite as a permanent addition to the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C.

The campaign to add FDR's prayer to the memorial started 12 years ago when Chris Long, president of the Ohio Christian Alliance (OCA), heard histo-

rian Bill Federer recite it on his radio program, *American Minute*.

"I wanted to honor that Greatest Generation," he told Newsmax. "I felt that it would be a lasting tribute to the generation that fought against tyranny for the cause of liberty."

Long needed an act of Congress to



STIRRING WORDS Chris Long in front of the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C., where the newly inscribed words "A prayer for the nation" commemorate FDR's D-Day radio broadcast 79 years ago.

amend the memorial. So, in 2011 he asked Republican Congressman Bill Johnson, a retired Air Force lieutenant colonel from Ohio's 6th District, to shepherd the bill through Congress.

They then brought Ohio Republican Sen. Rob Portman on board to work it through the Senate.

But Long still had a lot of work to do. It is little known that most of our nation's monuments in Washington, D.C., are not funded by the government.

Long started a fundraising campaign, calling it the D-Day Prayer Project. Small donations poured in from across the country. But the work had to be started within seven years or the project would have to be re-authorized by Congress.

Their deadline was approaching and they were still very short of their goal. Long decided that it was time to pray.

"We felt confident that God would somehow provide us with the resources that we needed," he said.

His prayer was answered by a grant from the Lilly Endowment, a private philanthropic foundation supporting the causes of religion, education, and community development. It gave \$2 million.

Construction began in July 2022, and the D-Day prayer was added to the WWII memorial last December. The official dedication of the Prayer Project will be on June 6. □

Peter Jedick is the author of *Why America Is Bankrupt*. His father parachuted into France on D-Day with the 101st Airborne Division.

D-Day at a Glance

» **Launched:** Tuesday, June 6, 1944.

» **Code name:** Operations Overlord and Neptune. The largest seaborne invasion in history.

» **Where:** The beaches of Normandy in northern France.

» **Mission:** The liberation of France and the rest of Western

Europe from German Nazi occupation.

» **Manpower:** 156,000 Allied forces from the U.S., U.K., Canada, and nine other nations, led by Gen. Dwight Eisenhower.

» **Equipment:** 6,939 vessels, 1,213 warships, 4,126 landing craft, and 864 merchant vessels.

» **Casualties:** On the first day alone, 10,000 Allied forces with 4,414 confirmed dead.

» **One week later:** By June 11, the beaches were fully secured and over 326,000 troops, more than 50,000 vehicles, and some 100,000 tons of equipment had landed at Normandy.

» **One month later:** The Allies captured the vital port of Cherbourg, landed 850,000 men and 150,000 vehicles.

» **11 months later:** The Allies formally accepted the unconditional surrender of Nazi Germany on May 8, 1945, a week after their leader Adolf Hitler committed suicide. □