

With a number of funerals in the past few months from President Bush's generation and his death, I've been reflecting on what has been called the greatest generation. As I read or heard their stories, I was amazed at their experiences. When I think that this generation went from horses to rockets, from party-lines to cell phones, I get a sense of the change they experienced in a lifetime. It also gives me a sense of the great things they did.

Sometimes, we don't know the full extent of their stories. As I listened to a sister talk about Clara, she shared how she had gone down to the Houston shipyards during WWII. It seems that women of small stature were needed to weld in small spaces. Clara went to Houston and became a welder for the war effort. We often celebrate the veterans who served, but women like Clara doing a necessary job for the war effort were just as important. Yet, her story remained untold until the funeral luncheon. I know many more women made the same kind of sacrifices for the war effort. Without them, we might not have won the war.

Clara's story brings me to another mark of this generation, humility. They didn't need to blow their horn about how great they were. Many of their accomplishments will remain unknown. They simply saw a job that needed to be done, and they went and did it. I buried one veteran in McGregor with such a story. When the family was going through his belongings, they found a bronze star and some oak leaf clusters. He was a decorated war hero, but no one knew it. He never said a word about being a hero. I think that's because he didn't see himself as a hero; he just did his job.

The last mark I admire about this generation is that they loved the church. When I visited with them, they often said to me, "I just wish I could go to church once more." Church was a priority to them. Most of them came to church until they were physically unable to attend. When they reached that point, they mourned their inability to attend. They had a deep love for the community of faith. I pray they aren't the last generation with such a passion.

Pastor Parnell