An Overview of the U.S. Military Chaplaincy: A Ministry of Presence and Practice

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Most people know of the existence of U.S. military chaplains and generally appreciate their service in times of war. Yet the chaplaincy as an organization is less known and certainly not appreciated to the extent it would be were the "facts to be known." Accordingly, this article provides basic introductory information about the U.S. military chaplaincy and its historical development, church-state issues surrounding the chaplaincy, chaplain roles and responsibilities, and organizational oversight of the chaplaincy. It concludes with some reflections on current challenges facing the chaplaincy, as well as three appendices: a list of relevant statutes and military documents; a bibliography of related readings; and an anonymous military chaplain's diary titled, "Sunday in Iraq: A Day in the Life of a Marine Corps Chaplain."

Introduction

The military chaplaincy serves primarily to ensure that the free exercise of religion is supported in all military settings. Chaplains also provide professional guidance and advice to commanders, staff, and all other military personnel on issues of spirituality, religious dynamics, ethics, morality, and personal wellbeing. Chaplains serve under the command of a senior officer and are required to protect "freedom of religion and freedom of worship" while avoiding activities that create a preference for any specific religion. The U.S. military chaplaincy is the embodiment of interfaith structure and pluralistic cooperation while serving as a strong front line defense of freedom of religion.

U.S. military chaplains are ordained clergy—priests, pastors, rabbis, imams, or ministers—who are recommended to the various military Services by their "endorsing agency" (the official religious body that credentials chaplains as clergy representing that faith group) and serve as commissioned military officers. They are subject to the same requirements for service as other commissioned officers with regard to age, education, and physical fitness and are additionally required to have the training and educational specialties that support their specialized service. After formal acceptance into the military and the chaplaincy, they serve in their respective Branches (Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard) as religious leaders and professional chaplains. U.S. chaplains are non-combatants, meaning they do not receive formal weapons training. The Geneva Convention (Article 24) identifies chaplains as protected

personnel in their function and capacity as ministers of religion. In light of their non-combatant status, if chaplains are captured, they are expected to continue in their religious capacity as "retained personnel," not prisoners of war (POWs), and be repatriated as soon as possible.

Chaplains are advocates of spiritual, moral, and ethical maturity and resiliency and are considered militarily essential and inherently governmental in nature, thus fulfilling the government's robust responsibilities to those who serve.[1] Formal duties of chaplains include: worship services; liturgies; rites, funerals and honors to the dead; hospital, prison, education, and pastoral ministries; spiritual renewal activities; humanitarian projects; and providing ministries to dependents and other authorized individuals.

The practice of clergy accompanying men into battle is rooted in ancient history and practice. Some scholars contend that religious clergy always play a specific role in warfare. Others focus on a particular historical era in which they believe the relationship of clergy to warfare was especially significant (e.g., The Crusades). Still others specify that although clergy are always involved in life and death, war and peace, the establishment of an official clergy dates to the development of modern European armies with concomitant bureaucratization (Clausewitz) and the establishment of staff officers (Napoleon). By the time the United States became a country, the idea and institution of chaplaincy was well accepted and institutionalized by the English, French, Spanish, and Dutch. The colonial governments in America built on these traditions and modified them in direct relationship to the principles of the new country and the Constitution.

The Army Chaplaincy was established July 1775 by the Continental Congress. George Washington issued the following order: "The honorable Continental Congress having been pleased to allow a Chaplain to each regiment are directed to procure Chaplains accordingly; persons of good characters and exemplary lives—to see that all inferior officers and soldiers pay them a suitable respect and attend carefully upon religious exercises." It is noted that the pay was $20.00 per month, that regimental commanders were to find their own chaplain, and that there were no requirements as to denomination, church, ordination, or education. Congress, upon nomination by a unit commander in the Continental Army, issued the chaplains commissions. Colonial governors also appointed chaplains to serve in their respective militias. A total of 219 chaplains are known to have served in the Revolution, 111 of whom were in the Continental Army.

In November of 1775, the Navy established a Chaplain Corps to provide religious services for the new Continental Navy. The first Navy chaplain is believed to have been Reverend Benjamin Balch, commissioned October 30, 1799. The second article of the Navy regulations of 1775 reads: "The Commanders of the ships of the thirteen United Colonies are to take care that divine services be performed twice a day on board, and a sermon preached on Sundays, unless bad weather or other extraordinary accidents prevent." In 1841, general regulations mandated ordination and good moral character be the characteristics of Navy chaplains, a regulation that still stands. Today the Navy chaplaincy has a mission statement, a list of priorities for service, guiding principles, a vision statement, and a Code of Ethics (found in DOD / Navy documents available at www.chaplain.navy.mil).

Chaplains have served in every war the United States has fought—including the Civil War. In any of the wars up to and including the Civil War, the specific numbers of chaplains or chaplain casualties is unknown because until approximately 1880, chaplains were not always "official" and many men served without being either officers or endorsed by a specific denomination. The increasing formalization of the U.S. military chaplaincy in the First and

Second World War resulted in better, but not great, record keeping. The U.S. Army and Marines lost 100 chaplains in World War II, a casualty rate greater than any other branch except infantry and Army Air Corps.

Military ministry is different from "church" or parochial ministry. Chaplains rotate in and out of chapel (church) leadership based on military assignment priorities, not congregational preference. The chaplain is not "called" by a church as such; he is under contract to the U.S. government. Chaplains must minister to service personnel and their families regardless of their particular church affiliation, making it by design a more global and pluralistic ministry. Funding for the chaplains is not dependent on denominational or individual contributions, but the taxpayer. The chaplaincy is funded by appropriated and non-appropriated dollars. Commanders own the responsibility to provide for the free exercise of religion for their service members and budget accordingly for facilities, programs, and material. Service members and their families also contribute at their discretion to a special fund to support specific chapel activities and beneficent acts of religion.

Formal chapel worship events and services are scheduled to support the particular regimens of duty stations, training regimes, or operational tempo. Services may be held in tents, the back of semi-trucks, underground, in gymnasiums, or in a variety of other temporary accommodations. Church governance in the civilian sector varies considerably but the chaplaincy is constrained by statutes and directives of the U.S. government. Religious programs are required to meet the needs of all assigned personnel regardless of their faith group. Chaplains are always accountable for ministry practice to all faith groups while they serve in the military yet maintain close ties to their respective endorsers. However, all chaplains serve as commissioned officers under the rank, structure and authority of the military and commanders and supervisory chaplains in the conduct of their duties. The military chaplain is unique and remarkable in that he/she is committed to serve God and Man in the most variable and difficult of circumstances. (The word "pluralism" does not even begin to cover it.)

Currently there are approximately 3,000 active duty military chaplains serving in the U.S. military (Army 1,580; Navy 800; and Air Force 549); nearly 2,000 more serve as Reservists. (The U.S. Marine Corps' chaplains are part of the Navy chaplaincy, although they may wear USMC officer uniforms.) Chaplains are in ministry for over 3 million service members, and are rather evenly split between land based forces and sea based forces. The most common religious traditions of chaplains are Protestant and Catholic, but overall some 175 different "religions" or denominations are represented within the chaplaincy.[2]

Church and State

There are few more stark examples of the dynamic tension between the "establishment clause" and the "free exercise" clause of the United States Constitution as the U.S. military chaplaincy. The First Amendment states: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."[3]

It is worthy of note that this was the *First* Amendment; although religion is not addressed in the Preamble or the main body of the Constitution, the writers of the Bill of Rights acknowledged that freedom of religious belief preceded speech, press, and assembly. Without freedom of belief, the other freedoms would become moot. All of the Amendments restrict

government, and the First Amendment is no exception. The government is precluded from establishing an official religion as well as obligated to protect the free exercise of religion.[4]

The writers of the U.S. Constitution, acknowledging the religious wars of Europe, bowing to practical politics, and respecting the rights of individuals to practice their own religion, were extremely careful not to establish an official church that would link the power and resources of the government with the power and resources of a religion. Most of the Founders felt that religious belief was conducive to good citizenship and public morality, and was at the basis of the successful working of a nation, but they balked at any official church establishment. The U.S. military chaplaincy is a direct mirror of these views: the chaplains are required to serve "individuals" not as members of a specific denomination but as individuals requiring spiritual and religious rights and freedoms.[5]

On the surface, the U.S. military chaplaincy may seem dangerously close to being a religious institution "established" by the state. Yet this would be a serious misreading of both policy and practice. The chaplaincy is in direct support of the "free exercise" clause and, when functioning properly, presents no threat to the "establishment clause." The U.S. Constitution restricts the activities of the federal government (note the amendments are premised with the phrase, "the government shall make no….") and is based on the idea that minority rights should be protected from the "tyranny of the majority." The chaplaincy is in a primary position to help protect and enable the exercise of these freedoms in the military context.

There are, of course, risks associated with a government-supported chaplaincy. One set of problems comes from those who would like to use the chaplaincy inappropriately to support government (especially Department of Defense) programs. Another class of problems comes from those who would use the chaplaincy to support specific church, denominational agendas. Both of these kinds of problems have recurred intermittently during the history of the chaplaincy, often hitting the media with a great deal of noise, but have usually been addressed quickly by the sensible, sane, and informed in the U.S. government and by the attentive public. Any attempts to use the chaplains to inappropriately support programs of the DOD are met with chaplain resistance (and in any case are likely to be scrapped because of resource constraints). Attempts to use the chaplaincy to support specific churches, denominations, or evangelical fervor are equally challenged by the laws prohibiting those activities.

Some critics argue more broadly that, even when the chaplaincy is functioning without obvious biases or corruptions, it is still by its nature a religious "instrument of the state" and hence a violation of the separation of church and state. For instance, some question whether the presence of official chaplains inappropriately "sanctifies" the battlefield by implicitly bringing God into the battle space on one side or another. There is also concern that the state is only using religion to serve its own war-fighting interests. Indeed, "spiritually fit" war fighters are presumably more capable on the battlefield, for they know the reasons for which they fight (just war), how they should fight (rules of armed conflict), and how their activities contribute to the greater good. Soldiers who are healthy, emotionally/psychologically as well as physically, are more efficient and effective in the fight. Therefore, to the extent that the work of chaplains aids emotional/psychological strength, it contributes to overall fighting strength. However, the mere fact that the chaplaincy could be helpful to the operational success of the military is not a prima facia establishment of religion. If the objectives of the military are secular, and the chaplaincy operates in pluralistic way, and the motives and behaviors of the chaplains themselves are not

politically or religious biased,[6] the tension between free exercise and establishment can be managed in a healthy way vis-à-vis the military chaplaincy.

Roles and Responsibilities

Providing leadership in religious services and pastoral care is the main job of the chaplains. However, it is a mistake to imagine that military chaplains are directly analogous to civilian clergy. Their place in the military structure is unique and well institutionalized, and their roles are many and diverse. Indeed, a completely comprehensive list of what military chaplains actually "do" on a daily basis would require a separate article. What follows is just a brief summary of some of the key points.[7] In the contemporary military, chaplains:

- must attend chaplains' school in order to learn both how to be a military officer and how to serve as an effective chaplain in the U.S. military
- serve as part of a command, and are responsible to a chain of command as officers
- are paid according to rank and years of service as are other officers
- comply with all official military regulations (e.g., regarding appropriate dress, behavior, etc.)
- wear the officer's uniform of their service, and have religious insignia on their uniform
- serve in "camp" (barracks) domestically or are deployed outside the United States at the service's discretion
- lead voluntary religious services, and facilitate leadership of such services by other clergy, as directed by the commanding officer
- provide special services at weddings, memorial services, and on holidays
- provide pastoral counseling
- provide and facilitate post-traumatic stress disorder counseling.[8]
- visit servicemen wherever they are, including combat, the brig, or in school
- visit the families of servicemen where practicable
- provide and monitor religious literature
- provide death rites and funeral services
- serve in hospitals and tend to the wounded
- provide leadership in humanitarian projects
- provide education and/or expertise on ethics
- are enjoined from intelligence collection or target selection but are expected to participate in operational planning and advise the command and staff on matters related to religion
- provide assistance in liaison with local religious leaders in a given area of operation
- are part of, and are generally the commanding officer for, a "Unit Ministry Team" (UMT), which includes non-commissioned officers as support for Religious Affairs
- are prohibited from carrying weapons

On this last point about weapons, note that the United States is subject to the Geneva Protocols of 1977. The Protocols do not specifically state whether chaplains may bear arms but they do stipulate that chaplains are "noncombatants." The meaning is somewhat controversial in that the right to "self-defense" is never abrogated. When a U.S. military chaplain is under fire or is in a position to defend others, it can be argued that using a weapon is justified and justifiable under the Laws of Armed Conflict.[9]

Finally, the roles and responsibilities of chaplains are generally fulfilled with the assistance of a team of enlisted religious support staffers; in the Army and in the Air Force they are called Chaplain Assistants, and in the Navy they are called Religious Program Specialists. The team functions as a unit, each person with special responsibilities and duties.[10] The Army's Chaplain Assistant Program was formally established in 1949 and the Navy's Religious Program Specialist program began in 1979. The Air Force generally followed the Army's Chaplain Assistant Program model. The idea was to provide support personnel who are skilled specifically in religious programming and administration.

By way of illustration, here is a list of some of the key duties the Navy assigns a Religious Program Specialist (the Army has a similar list for its Chaplain Assistants):

- determine religious program support requirements
- assist in management of religious programs and facilities
- ensure that financial records of religious offerings are maintained, and serve as offerings fund account custodian for the non-appropriated religious offerings
- manage appropriated funds and property accounts in support of religious programs
- maintain ecclesiastical documents
- requisition, receive, maintain, and safeguard ecclesiastical equipment and supplies
- assist in assembly and distribution of selected devotional and religious education material
- assist in the supervision of the office of the chaplain
- coordinate volunteer religious programs
- train personnel in support of religious programs
- serve as coordinator of religious education
- maintain liaison with ecclesiastical and community agencies
- maintain shipboard libraries

Organizational Oversight of the Chaplaincy

Chaplains are formally responsible to (a) their faith tradition and endorsing agency, (b) the military chain of command, and (c) the Chaplaincy and Chief of Chaplains. The basic requirements to become a chaplain are: ordination and ecclesiastical endorsement by a valid religious faith group recognized by the Department of Defense, and a Masters Degree. (These are in addition to standard military requirements such as health, age, good standing, lack of criminal violations, etc.) Endorsing agencies, as established in 1905, function so as to screen, recommend, and counsel member clergy who indicate a desire to become U.S. military chaplains. Each endorsing agency has different processes and procedures in accordance with their own denomination requirements. Although rare, endorsing agencies can withdraw an endorsement if the clergy violates a specific requirement of the denomination. After a chaplain is

accepted into service, the endorsing agency cannot take them out of military service and only has the power of membership requirements for the denomination. There are some problems with clergy that represent small church/faith groups that are "non-denominational" and/or that do not have the organizational capability of acting as endorsing agencies. These potential clergy are handled on a case by case basis with some room for flexibility. (Special cases have included Wicca, Islam, Hindu, and Buddhist clergy.)

Commanders, whether Navy, Air Force, Army, or Coast Guard, have the ultimate authority over all military officers, including chaplains, within doctrine, policy, and law. Both component commanders and joint commanders are required to provide for the free exercise of religion for those under their authority by Department of Defense Directive 1300.17 and Joint Publication 0-2 whether in the continental U.S. or overseas.

The chaplain's role includes pastoral responsibilities and formal religious services as noted above, but he/she may also serve in an advisory capacity. For example, the commander may ask the chaplain for advice about individuals, morale, discipline, or even solicit personal counseling. Problems may arise when commanders do not know the rules under which chaplains serve, have issues with a particular chaplain or even the idea of the chaplaincy, or simply be overwhelmed with "war" issues or have other priorities. Relationships matter: on a day to day basis the chaplaincy is largely a "ministry of presence" within the military organization, and accordingly successful chaplains establish and maintain cordial and helpful relationships with commanding officers, other officers, and the NCO/enlisted personnel.

The Chief of Chaplain's office and the Joint Staff Chaplain provide additional guidance and support. The Chief of Chaplains for the Navy generally holds the rank of Rear Admiral. The Chief of Chaplains and his/her office are responsible for the organization and implementation of religious ministries to meet the needs of personnel in the sea service and their dependents in their pursuit of the free exercise of religion. This includes personnel of the Marine Corps, the Coast Guard, and the Merchant Marine. For the Army, the Chief of Chaplains is a Brigadier General with the same mandate but for the land based services. Likewise the Chief of Chaplains for the Air Force is a Brigadier General with a similar mandate but for air based services. These high ranks give chief chaplains access to other officers of similar rank, which allows input into strategic level decision-making insofar as it concerns religious factors.

The newest additions to the chaplains' responsibilities fall under the guise of inter-service and joint relationships. The Joint Staff Chaplain, headquartered at the Pentagon, has significant "reach-back" capabilities and coordinating responsibilities. The office serves as something of a clearing-house between service chaplaincies and now has the role of coordinating many chaplain functions in joint operations. It is both in support of and conflict with service chaplaincies. The Joint Staff chaplain has responsibilities for the dynamics of religion and potential mission impacts across the operational spectrum, integration of Religious Support Teams into joint force organizations, as well as other duties related to joint operations.

The National Guard Bureau (NGB) and the National Guard Joint Force Headquarters in the 50 states and four territories are also a Joint activity of the Department of Defense. The director oversees, develops, and implements activities of the NGB as well as integrates National Guard religious affairs related doctrine, organization, training, materiel, leader development, personnel, and facilities concerns for the Army, Air Force, and Joint Staff Chaplains. This is no

small task as there are nearly 2,000 National Guard chaplains that can be and often are mobilized as individuals rather than part of a unit.

Challenges

In my view, the first major challenge of U.S. military chaplains is to keep the balance between their service to God and service to their nation. Since the questions that revolve around this balance can be controversial and somewhat incendiary, the chaplaincy's preferred strategy of engagement with the public is usually to maintain a low profile. This is understandable, because when chaplains behave so as to draw attention to themselves and their role, it can "draw fire" from the part of the public that is uninformed or hostile to religion. Therefore, it is reasonably easy to get to know individual chaplains and much more difficult to know the chaplaincy itself.

The second major challenge is to keep the balance between basic spiritual service to the individual soldier and the pull of secondary duties—organizational, bureaucratic, situational, and opportunistic. Likewise the demands of family, health, and devotion that take time, energy, and resources but cannot be ignored or put off.

The third major challenge is the formalization of "advice to commanders" and "chaplain liaison." Because the nature of war itself has changed (from traditional or kinetic to nontraditional or insurgency), and because the U.S. military is deployed worldwide, there is an increasing belief that chaplains should be relevant to the current "fight." This includes the idea that since chaplains have always, and will always, be asked for advice by commanders on "all things religious," they should be legally empowered and then trained to do so within their formal duty requirements. In the history of the chaplaincy, individual chaplains, as they were informed and motivated, gave advice to commanders on religion in the combat arena. (This is well documented, for instance, in the Civil War, Philippine insurgency, Haiti, World War I, World War II, and Vietnam.) However, because official military doctrine did not specify that role and there were no written requirements that proscribed and prescribed specific activities, the chaplains were basically "on their own." This, of course, resulted in unrealistic expectations, unorthodox behaviors, and somewhat random results.[11]

A related challenge is keeping the chaplaincy relevant in military terms in an era dominated by irregular warfare and counterinsurgency—a fluid context wherein the chaplains may not always know their "lane in the road." For example, many of the Special Forces Units, Marine Corps platoons, and Army teams go "out" in small groups. Should chaplains accompany them in order to provide religious support? If so, what are the rules? There is always a concern that the chaplain be in the right place at the right time and doing the right thing—but prioritization is necessary in a strained and contentious security environment.

The newest version of the Joint Publication 1-05 of the Joint Staff Chief of Chaplains (tentatively set for release in late 2009) will help the chaplaincy meet these challenges by (1) providing doctrinal guidance for religious support of joint military operations, and (2) providing specific guidance for chaplains advising commanders about religious factors in operational areas. This also means that chaplains will have to be trained and taught the specific information and requirements to be able to fulfill these expectations. Fortunately, the schoolhouses for both Navy

and Army are developing programs of study to meet the challenge. Also, the Army, Navy, and Air Force chaplaincy schools are to be collocated at Fort Jackson, South Carolina by 2010. This implies that the services will either cooperate or combine chaplain training to meet new and emerging requirements. Endorsers and denominational support for these activities has been amazingly supportive within the mandates of specific religious practices.

A final challenge comes not from within the chaplaincy but from without—namely, from those who believe that the chaplaincy should be civilianized. The argument is that it would reduce the problems encountered by church-state controversies; that civilian chaplains would be less expensive; that the number of chaplains would better reflect current needs; and that the individuals who become chaplains would be of a higher quality because they would not have to sign up for a "career" but for short-term service, thus mitigating the effects of burnout and career stagnation. However, two major arguments against civilianization have thus far won the day: (1) the business of war is difficult and not meant for amateurs; and (2) the services require a stable, trained, professional clergy willing and able to take on some of the nation's most difficult problems in support of service personnel and their families in very difficult times.

No one would argue that the chaplaincy is a perfect institution, but the clergy who serve the United States are indeed some of the country's finest professionals. In my view, the problems lie in bureaucracy and institutions and how to adjust to changing times. The conceptual basis is sound, and in practice the military chaplaincy has proven itself worthy over 235 years.

Appendix 1

U.S. Law and Military Documents

U.S. Code Title X Sections 3073, 3547, 5142, 8067.

U.S. Code Title 14 ("Coast Guard").

U.S. Code Title 32 ("National Guard").

U.S. Code Title 50 ("War and National Defense").

Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 1-05, "Religious Support in Joint Operations," June 9, 2004, available online at http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/new_pubs/jp1_05.pdf.

Department of Defense Directive 1304.19, *Appointment of Chaplains for the Military Services*.

Department of Defense Instruction 1300.17, *Accommodation of Religious Practices Within the Military Services*.

Department of Defense Instruction 1304.28, *Guidance for the Appointment of Chaplains for the Military Departments*.

Department of Defense Directive 5100.73, *Major Department of Defense Headquarters Activities*.

U.S. Army Field Manual 16-1, "Religious Support."

Army Regulation 165-1 *Chaplain Activities in the U.S. Army*.

Secretary of the Navy Instruction (SECNAVINST) 1730.7C, *Religious Ministry within the Department of the Navy*.

Air Force Policy Directive (AFPD), *52-1 Chaplain Service*.

Marine Corps Manual, *Chaplains and Religious Affairs*.

Marine Corps Warfare Publication 6-12, *Religious Ministry Support in the USMC*.

Commandant, USCG Instruction M1730 4.B, *Religious Ministries within the Coast Guard*.

Appendix 2
Related Readings

Websites:

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Armed Forces Chaplains Board, http://www.defenselink.mil/prhome/mppchaplain.html.
Army Chaplain Corps, http://www.goarmy.com/chaplain/.
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Appendix 3
Sunday in Iraq: A Day in the Life of a Marine Corps Chaplain

Note: When I first approached the Marine Corps chaplaincy about an anonymous "typical day in the life of…" diary, I was asked, "Where? On board ship? In the desert? At school? In a military hospital?" While protesting that no day or location is "average," our contributor settled on a Sunday in Iraq deployed as an "infantry" chaplain. The events described below illustrate the extraordinary range of activities that fill a chaplain's day: advice to commanders, hospital visits, pastoral counseling, death counseling, mortuary arrangements, worship services, family responsibilities, financial responsibilities, scholarly work, prayer and contemplation … and maybe, just maybe, sleeping.

—Pauletta Otis, Marine Corps University

0500

- Wake up, assess the surroundings to find out exactly where I am.
- Make sure that the CAM lights are on around the perimeter.
- Check on the RA (religious assistant).
- Quick "desert bath" (baby wipes).
- Ready to rock and roll.

0530

- Out to BAS (Battle Aid Station) to check with doctors on medical situation.
- find injured and engage in prayer and conversation.
- try to boost morale of the medical staff.
- Eat MRE (Meal Ready to Eat) on the way to next point.

0600

- Find the CO (Commanding Officer) and assess whether the "coast is clear"—and if so, engage in conversation, use the "ministry of presence" and exchange information. He wants to know about the general health and morale of the troops; I need to know how he is doing and what the "main effort" for the day will be, and if possible to provide a little cheer, balance, and spiritual comfort.

0630

- Coordinate with the Battalion 3 and 4 to secure a ride to Alpha Company's forward position. After securing transportation and conveying my movements to the CO & XO, we move out.

0700 - 1000

- Get to the place(s) where worship services are needed and try to utilize the power of the altar to bring a word to the people. One of the 1st Sergeants "gently" suggests to the troops desiring worship services that: "The *#$%&?! chaplain is here. (Excuse me chaplain.)… Get your *#$%&?! in motion and get your *#$%&?! to the *#$%&?! meeting." Surprisingly, the attendance is rather high.
- Try to use the message and the altar not to beat the people of God but to build them and provide a relevant word from the Lord in the war zone.

- Some (actually many) want to talk; some hang around until they think no one else is there. The problems range from life and death on the battlefield, the wounded friend, whether their wife is faithful, financial problems at home, children, loneliness, "Dear Jody" letters… (One Sergeant calls it the "Krispy Kream Red Line").
- Try to hear their concerns and deal with the non-tangible attacks on their morale, their souls and spirit. Help them fight depression and keep their head in the fight.

1100 - 1500

- Stop at Bravo Company to conduct worship services.
- "Krispy Kreme Red Line" in progress—counseling, listening, encouraging.
- Stop at Charlie Company—another worship service and line of people wanting to talk and just be with others to assuage loneliness and find companionship.

1500

- Back at main camp to find out that a Marine was killed. Talk to the Commander and "scan" the leadership to see if they have their "invincible face" on or how they are doing mentally and emotionally. (Commanders often take the entire "blame" and consider any loss of a Marine their fault.)
- Huddle with Sgt.Maj. and Commander to determine a strategy for handling this loss.
- Find Marine's platoon and friends and meet with them, acknowledging and respecting the death.
- Cry with those who cry. Words do not help but the sense of spirituality seems to provide comfort.

1600

- Meet with Sgt. Maj. to plan memorial service.
- Arrange the return of the body.
- Provide a Marine escort to return to the U.S. with the body.
- Provide discreet and quiet support to all concerned.
- Work with Protocol office to make sure everything is done with respect and dignity.

1700

- Grab another MRE then move on to the HSN (command headquarters) for another worship service.
- Engage in discussion and offer counseling for commander, officers, and staff; try to provide pastoral support for the lonely, fearful, and angry; acknowledge that they are a blessing to me. (Some show enormous courage, discipline, devotion, and faith.)
- The Commander shows up for the meeting and I remember that this was the very officer who, when I was first assigned to his command, said that he would get rid of my billet (me!) as soon as possible and trade me in for a line officer. I had to be patient and persistent and prove my worth to him as an officer following good leadership principles and practices. Over time, and with the challenges of the battlefield, he became willing and even eager to ask for spiritual support for himself and the men.

2200

- Back at my “place” for a short time of journal entries, reading “Experiencing God” and the Bible, thinking about leadership values, and prayer…

1 Taken from DOD Joint Publication 1-05 (2009) p. 1-1.
2 Statistics that show specific denominational affiliation within each of the services can be found on the Active Duty Personnel Inventory File (DOD).
3 Alfred Stepan, "Religion, Democracy, and the 'Twin Tolerations'," *Journal of Democracy* 11:4 **(**October 2000): 37-57.
4 Leonard Levy, *The Establishment Clause: Religion and the First Amendment* (New York: Macmillan, 1986).
5 Daniel L. Dreisbach, Mark David Hall, and Jeffry H. Morrison, eds., *The Founders on God and Government* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004).
6 For more on chaplain motives, see Waldo W. Burchard, "Role Conflicts of Military Chaplains," *American Sociological Review* 19:5 (October 1954): 528-535.
7 In addition to these points of general applicability, there are of course duties particular to each Branch. For example, Navy chaplains may be called on by their commanding officer to perform services aboard ships other than their own or at shore stations.
8 Note that this is an increasingly controversial area of chaplain responsibility.
9 Unlike chaplains, enlisted chaplains' assistants are permitted to carry weapons.
10 The team may also include other chaplains, additional enlisted personnel, and volunteers.
11 In Bosnia/Kosovo, activities of the Canadian and U.S. chaplaincies were remarkably supportive and helpful for both the military peacekeepers and the civilian populations, but could not be "recognized" as formal chaplaincy achievements.