



Public Prayer

A new "line in the sand"
between members of federal
chaplaincies?



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The Military Chaplain

We have a mess! What now MCA?

As we are going to press, fall-out from attempts to gain a new “Military Chaplains Prayer Law” was not completely clear. The law was not included in the FY2007 Defense Bill. Some House conferees demanded a roll-back of recent Air Force and Navy policies. The matter could be reviewed early next year in full hearings before the House and Senate Armed Services Committees. The magazine cover might seem provocative. Like it or not, public perception of this “line in the sand” exists and grows day by day.

Over the last year, we appealed to you for discerning eyes and ears in the news about prayer controversies. We encouraged you to speak out and sought insertion of balanced information into the debate. Throughout this time, we constantly acknowledged that MCA members hold a wide variety of opinions about the public praying of chaplains. Following are a few doses of reality from a year or so of what some have called “Chaplaingate.”

Dose #1: Uninteresting Voice. The gathered experience and wisdom of our profession struggles to attract much interest in national debates about military chaplaincy. You probably already knew this. I haven’t enjoyed the recent evidence. Countless people are now resident authorities on military chaplains and religious ministry in the Armed Services. Many of those “authorities” haven’t ever served in the military. If they follow directives, active duty chaplains are limited in what they can contribute to this debate. Meanwhile, the most compelling voice for many people is relatively new to chaplaincy and seems to play by rules that are hard for me to fathom.

Dose #2: Guilty for Asking. To question claims of restriction on chaplain prayer rights or any proposed solutions brings all sorts of reactions. Many people assume this automatically means that the questioner is allied against evangelical Christians – or even against Jesus. I expected this. But it is still quite frustrating for the process of objective analysis much less not at all accurate in my case. Grave doubt about driving this matter into the political arena does not and should not necessarily mean a deaf ear for grievances that are woven into the controversy. Ironically, some will

honor the much-argued right to “personal conscience” as long as that conscience doesn’t touch the wrong button. We see this on both sides of the equation.

Dose #3: Lose-Lose Media Arena. Much of the news media is simply not interested in the whole picture. Sound bytes, simplistic statements, selective citations, and sensation-stirring materials are the order of the day. We experienced this with secular and religious media. As the issue wore on, strident rhetoric and name-calling from different directions didn’t help. One laudable exception was an article by Ellen Woods in the September issue of *Military Officer*, published by the Military Officer’s Association of America. She devoted her article to a positive picture of our active duty chaplains and their ministries.

Dose #4: Inadequate Definition. “Prayer” is not a word that instantly conveys universal agreement on expected form or content. Passionate appeal focused on how chaplains name deity in prayer. Were that the only matter relevant to prayer, this might be easier to handle with less heat and more light. No one can completely erase the fact that prayer customs in civilian settings include all sorts of things. Some of them would have clearly adverse consequences in mandatory military settings. Should chaplains have the weighty charter of Public Law to pray veiled or open criticisms of the Troops, commanders, or another religious tradition much less outright imprecations against them? Sound improbable if not ludicrous? Elevating private conscience over public duty flings the door wide open for such practices.

Can we help move the chaplain prayer debate away from distortions? Can we help the key players maintain policies that are equitable for all “stakeholders”? Or must we watch this whole affair lurch along sowing seeds that could bring the eventual demise of military chaplaincy? That notion is reviving. Read “GI Jesus, The Real Problem with Military Chaplains” by Christopher Hitchens at www.slate.com.

We have a mess! We also have a window of opportunity! It won’t remain open very long. Many others with conflicting agendas are fully engaged in this matter. What now for us MCA?

The Editor





Caring for the Reputation of Chaplaincy

Chaplain Herman Keizer, Jr. addressed the crucial issue of chaplaincy reputation at our 2006 National Institute in Memphis. To set the stage, he reviewed two important stories in the history and legacy of military chaplaincy.

First, "Chaplain" is an interesting word. It comes from the Anglo-Norman and old French *chapelain*, from the Medieval Latin *cappellanus*. The word was originally associated with the temporary structure that the King of France used to house both the cloak and the guardian of the cloak of Saint Martin of Tours.

Born about AD 315, Martin entered a world in transition. Martin's father, a Roman army officer, remained faithful to the old religion and suspicious of the new Christian sect, as did Martin's mother. Martin's own spiritual yearning and hunger led him at age ten to secretly knock on the door of a Christian church and beg to become a catechumen. Martin was still unbaptized when forced to join the Roman army at age 15. He was assigned to a ceremonial cavalry unit that protected the emperor and rarely saw combat. He soon became an officer and was assigned to garrison duty in Gaul. Here the event took place that has been portrayed in art throughout the ages.

On a bitterly cold winter day, the young Roman Tribune (now age 18) rode through the gates, probably dressed in the regalia of his unit with gleaming armor and a beautiful lined cloak. Martin saw a beggar with clothes so ragged that he was practically naked and suffering from the cold.

Overcome with compassion, Martin took off his mantle (cappel). With a quick stroke of his sword, he slashed the lovely mantle in two, handed half to the freezing man, and wrapped the remainder on his own shoulders. That night Martin dreamed that

he saw Jesus wearing the half mantle given the beggar. Jesus said to the angels and saints that surrounded him "See! This is the mantle that Martin, yet a catechumen, gave me." When he woke went immediately to be baptized.

The cloak eventually became a sacred relic that was carried into battle. The keeper of the Saint Martin's cloak, the one who carried it into battle, was the *cappellanus*.

Historically, chaplains have been - and still are - the "keepers of sacred things." Chaplains carry the love of God to people who are on battlefields, in hospitals, in prisons, in distress and pain, and in the shadow of death. I continue to thank God that He has so marked humans with His Image that the spiritual or religious dimension of human life is recognized by secular institutions. These secular institutions acknowledge that they must attend to this spiritual dimension as vital to a person's life and health and important enough to hire chaplains specially trained in pastoral ministry. God has given us the blessing of being a "keeper of sacred things" and invites us to care for His spirit in the men and women who bear His image regardless of the faith they profess.

A second story that you all know is worth retelling. Jesus Christ once said, "Greater love has no man than to lay down his life for his friends." The story of the Four Chaplains of the Dorchester is a story about that kind of love. *Herm went on with an inspiring tribute to the Dorchester chaplains.*



I, like you, have many stories of men and women that carried the reputation of chaplaincy forward. In 1962, I was drafted and served for two years as a chaplain's assistant at Fort Belvoir. The senior chaplain was a Roman Catholic, Ferdinand Evans. His deputy was Chaplain Bob Scott, Disciples of Christ, and a POW in WWII. They were the best mentors I have seen.

Those of you who have served in the Army may recognize some of the names of the young chaplains who were assigned to that installation:

Don Wilson, Al Ledebuhr, Ed O'Shea, Porter Brooks, and Grover DeVault. That was a crew! They had a love for the chaplaincy that was evident to all

on the installation. I became a chaplain because of the influence of these men.

In Vietnam, I served with some of the most selfless servants. Chaplain John Timperly and Oris Kelly were the two division chaplains I served under. I have friends from that war that held the banner of the chaplaincy high and built the reputation of chaplaincy service in a difficult war. We had some chaplains who disagreed with the war and the conduct of the war, but served quietly and courageously. Priests were in short supply. We had no rabbis. Dick Goldsmith and I conducted Bible studies on Old Testament subjects. Jewish soldiers attended.

I want to reflect on one part of the chaplains' reputation that was a big part of my service and experience. One of the functions of religion is to help people who are at the end of their tether. It is at the extremes of life that we often meet God.

Early in my time as a chaplain, I met some senior chaplains who talked to me about ministry to the system. Chaplaincy was more than dealing with individual soldiers - but with organizations as well. Evil was not only present in individual behavior but in organizational behavior. I watched how that worked out in the life of the Army.

In the late 60's the Army was at its limits with race relations. The nation was awash with racial tensions. Chaplains were called upon to step into the breach. Then came drug and alcohol abuse. Over 200 chaplains were assigned to Drug and Alcohol teams.

Next, chaplains were called upon to help the Army fix leadership because it was broke. Chaplains wrote some of the first leadership manuals. Then came "Organizational Effectiveness" with the Army's Chaplain Board in the lead and after that a new emphasis on "ethics and values." Chaplains were assigned to each of the service schools to teach ethics and leadership.

The chaplains were concerned about families before the Army could spell the word. One of the unintended consequences of the all-volunteer force was an increase in the married force. Young soldiers arrived at their first duty station with a new truck and a new wife, usually chosen in that order.

The chaplaincy built a reputation as people who were concerned about the system and made valuable contributions to the health of the Army. In the corps of chaplains all was not easy as chaplains moved from more traditional roles to a broader definition of religious ministry. There was fear of becoming social workers. In religious language this was prophetic ministry. Chaplains were involved in critical system issues.

In more recent times, chaplains have been instrumental in building international chaplain communities, advising commanders on religion in the Area of Operations, building joint war fighting teams and at senior policy levels. Just look at the places today that we have chaplains. You will see that we have added value to the military mission by our presence, skill, and courage. Our task in and out of uniform is to build on that reputation.

The chaplaincy is not the creation of the religious communities in the United States. It was created by commanders, especially by General George Washington. He saw the need for men and women of faith and moral virtue as essential to good order and discipline in his unique military. In the book *Washington's God* by Michael and Jana Novak, the authors note several times the importance Washington placed on chaplains. About that Army the authors say "It is one of the least celebrated of Washington's accomplishments that he forged the first national peoples Army in the world, whose structure and spirit had, *no parallel in the annals of human revolution ... no model on the face of the globe.*" Chaplaincy was Washington's gift to his Army of freemen.

Our challenge is to honor that gift and focus on the unique opportunity to minister in the military forces of a democratic government, in a multi-faith environment, while remaining true to our faith traditions. I think that calls us to a humble discussion in which we honor the Image of our Creator God in all men and women in uniform.



Chaplain (Colonel) Herman Keizer, Jr., USA (Ret)

MCA Members Speak Out On the Military Chaplains Prayer Legislation



*A letter to Congress from
Chaplain Fred Zobel:*

Dear Representative Miller:

As a retired Navy Chaplain, I request that the legislative issue regarding the right of a military chaplain to pray according to the dictates of his/her faith should be continued as an issue at the

DOD level. Whenever a chaplain provides a public prayer, he/she should always remember that they are praying not only according to the dictates of their faith, but also in a manner that respects and considers all persons in attendance regardless of their beliefs. A chaplain's public prayer IS NOT always about just him or her. I believe that presently the ongoing process for resolving this issue would be handled more effectively in the DOD arena instead of the legislative chambers.

Sincerely, Fred Zobel, Pensacola, FL

Then more comments from Fred:

Since I was out of space in my note to the congressman, I failed to say why I thought DOD should try to resolve the issue vice the congress. Simply put, I think DOD handling the issue is better because the discussion leaves out much of politics associated whenever issues are moved to the congressional side of the house.

DOD will objectively consider, in my opinion, all sides of the issue whereas the legislature, by its nature as an elective body, will consider mainly the side of those making the complaints. My belief is not prejudiced by an opinion for or against either side of the issue.

Fred Zobel, USN retired, Florida

With institutional ministry -
"What someone sows, someone else
is likely to reap."



Greetings in Jesus' name!

As with most of us I have been following this subject closely and prayerfully, knowing the opposition will take every opportunity to restrict us in our ministry as we open the door to enhance it. Therefore we should leave well enough alone. As

to our conservative brethren, of whom I am one, I ask the question. Doesn't our Lord tell us to pray "Our Father who art in heaven, . . . ? And are we above the government who pays us? With this in mind there should be no problem including all attending in our prayers.

However, I have also taken a different approach! When I pray, I have told the listeners, that I am praying for them not with them. ". . . prayers made for everyone. I Tim. 2.1". As their spiritual leader, if they want to be blessed let me approach the Father in the most effective way possible. And, to do that, for me is to pray in Jesus' name. They do not have to believe, or agree with me, but all would appreciate the blessing requested. It is like bringing a glass of cold water to a dying man in the desert, he does not care who brings it or where he gets it, just give it. That is how we need to look at prayer.

Many who are listening are not participating, When we chaplains ask them how we should pray, it is like a Flight Leader at a briefing session before flight asking the crew where we are going and why, or passengers on a plane telling the pilot what direction will bring them to their destination. The leaders do not listen to them nor should we as chaplains, let them tell us how to pray.

After telling them that you are praying for them, let them listen and get on with it anyway you know how. And if in Jesus' name, and they are blessed, they will come back for more. And as far as letting them know that you are praying for them and not assuming that they believe, if they complain a brief explanation will usually settle the matter. Of course that was before we asked Congress!

Just a thought, from my book out of the past during 27 years as chaplain with a "rowdy bunch of civilian pilots & maintenance crews called the CAP"--really great guys and gals, searching for the down and lost.

Ed Whitford, CAP retired, Tecate, CA



I sent a telefax to every member of the Senate Armed Services Committee urging disapproval. Thanks for letting us know about this governmental attempt to regulate prayer.

Arnie Porter, USAF retired,
Alexandria, VA



In the Orthodox Catholic Church each chaplain prays in the Orthodox tradition, and is watched by his endorser bishop to assure that he does not stray from his seminary teaching, or the faculties granted him by said bishop. Dictates of his own conscience gives a priest to much room for error in church teaching.

Archbishop John T. Kelly, D.D., Bay Shore, NY

The Work of the Chaplain. By Naomi K. Paget and Janet R. McCormack. Judson Press. \$12 paper. Available October 2006.

The authors, both experienced chaplains, provide a look at what makes chaplaincy ministry unique, and offer direction in the integral areas of accountability, privacy, personal ethics, and spiritual assessment. This volume is particularly useful in helping people gain a basic overview of chaplaincy in general. Highly recommended.

Divided by God: America's Church – State Problem -- and What We Should Do about It. By Noah Feldman. Publishers Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2005. \$14 paper and \$25 hdbd. Go to www.fsgbooks.com.

Recommended by Chaplain Stan Beach as a good read with application to chaplains in the public square. Insightful history for understanding and approaching our modern confusion and obstacles facing our chaplain ministries. Some repetition, but often needed to preclude re-reading other parts. 34 pages of valuable footnotes.

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31 August 2006 letter to Navy chaplains

. . . Throughout our nation's history, chaplains have proved their resiliency in adapting to uncertainty and change. . . Each person in our Corps has a shared calling to minister to those in uniform. This is something entrusted to us by God and our country. To truly be one Corps, we must remember that we are *entrusted* with this ministry, not *entitled* to it. May we articulate with a common voice the message of one Chaplain Corps entrusted to provide ministry to those of other faiths and caring for all Service members, to include those claiming no religious faith.

Rear Admiral Alan T. "Blues" Baker, Deputy Chief of Navy Chaplains



Public Prayer: The Sacred Moment

In February 2002, Chaplain Jeni Cook submitted an article on prayer for the MCA publication "Voices of Chaplaincy" while serving as Director of the Veterans Affairs Department Chaplain Service. We are reprinting her insights here in view of ongoing debate about the public prayers of chaplains. Chaplain Cook continues to serve in the Department of Veterans Affairs chaplaincy as the Associate Director for Spiritual Health Initiatives.

Offering public prayers for official ceremonies may be one of the most frequently requested, yet often poorly prepared duties performed by federal chaplains. As we know, *anyone can pray*. However, not everyone does offer an effective public prayer. Like our preaching, the quality of our public prayers will shape how others view the professionalism of the individual "pray-er," and it will also shape how others view the professionalism of chaplains, in general.

In the span of one to three minutes, the chaplain has the opportunity to focus the audience's thought on what is deeply meaningful. We ask our "prayer participants" to transcend what is happening around them and focus briefly on God. It is an awesome responsibility and one that is highly visible. The chaplain has only a few words to utter, but the potential impact may be immeasurable.

Unfortunately, some public "pray-ers" assume that since they have a great deal of experience in praying, they can always pray "off the cuff." Sometimes, we *are* asked to pray *without warning*, and we can hope that when this happens, God's Spirit will lead us. However, if we have been notified in advance that we will be asked to lead in public prayer and we do not prepare, it often reflects either the chaplain's laziness or arrogance.



I disagree with those who believe that the Holy Spirit is always more directly at work in spontaneous prayer. The Spirit of God leads us just as well in the privacy of our offices or homes, as we *prepare* the prayer. The question arises: "Would you prepare your words if you were given three minutes to address the President of the United States?" If so, then we might offer God at least the same level of respect. And regardless of how many individuals or what sector of the American public we pray with, they also deserve better than what comes off the tops of our heads. Sometimes we say things inadvertently in spontaneous prayer that alienates or offends others. It is an activity that deserves preparation.

An effective public prayer cannot be long. Once I stood during a 12-minute prayer offered by a minister prior to the seating of a White House breakfast. I suspect that even the most devout in the group quit praying around minute 5 or 6 and became lost in the details. I confess wondering if this would be the clergyperson's 15 minutes of fame. We must be careful never to forget that the public prayer is not about the one offering it. It doesn't matter if the public cannot remember the chaplain's name. It matters only that the prayer assists them in knowing God by name.

Sometimes program planners will attempt to tell the chaplain how long he/she can pray. Once I was told that I could have between 30 seconds and one minute for the prayer. I thought that rather restrictive and told the planner I would need time enough to make the prayer *meaningful*. "If we don't have a minute for God on the program, then perhaps we shouldn't *pretend* that we believe prayer to be meaningful activity," I said. Effective prayer is more than just an element of program *protocol*. Our prayers must be more than ornamental.

I always ask if it is an invocation, a benediction, or both that is requested. I have made assumptions that caught me off-guard and unprepared. The question also allows the chaplain to do some educating of the program director, if that is needed. More people than I thought do not know what to call the prayers at the beginning or the end of a program.

It is also a very good idea to ask for details about the event when someone invites you to offer a prayer for any program. Once I was asked to offer a prayer in a hospital chapel for a Memorial Day program for hospitalized veterans. I clearly did not ask enough questions. There was no written sequence of events or printed program. The ceremony opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and the Invocation. I prayed about the meaning of Memorial Day and the sacrificial giving of one's self on behalf of others. Then beauty queens were introduced, and I learned that the program was partly planned as their opportunity to practice their talent in front of a live audience. I left when the belly dancer began, having learned an important lesson. Fortunately, there was no request for a benediction. The following year we all agreed that not all programs called for prayer.



Nevertheless, *usually*, when the chaplain is invited to offer a public prayer, the opportunity is great. This does not mean that it is an important opportunity for the chaplain to meet, greet and rub elbows with important people on the dais. It means that this is an opportunity to do God's bidding. More people are in attendance at some of these programs than gather to hear us preach in a year's time. The chaplain is in a position to speak to some in the audience who may, in no other setting, hear a word from God.

The chaplain's words must be carefully crafted to succinctly bring a transcendent perspective and a sense of God's holy presence. The prayer also expresses to God the honest thoughts and needs of the people. Before writing the prayer (which I believe should always be written out fully, but prayed with inflection and passion), the chaplain should outline the points to be made. I find these most salient points by asking questions such as:

- *What role does God play in this event?*
- *How does God think about what is happening/what we are recognizing in this event?*
- *How do we (the people gathered for the event) participate in what God is doing or wants to do here and now?*
- *In what way is this moment holy?*
- *What are the spiritual needs or pains of this audience at this moment?*
- *What does God want to say to us about those needs?*
- *What do we need to confess to God?*
- *What do the people of God need to do as a result of this event?*

Questions such as these almost always bring thoughts to mind that should be vocalized. They also bring an emotive "tone" to the prayer.

...continued on page 10

Almighty God of Enduring Freedom:

We pause today to acknowledge that freedom is Your gift. We have not created it; and we cannot sustain it without You.

But this amphitheater is filled with veterans who know the imperative of making whatever sacrifice is necessary so that all people may enjoy your gift of freedom. Beyond this amphitheater lie the remains of hundreds of thousands of veterans who, likewise, have fought the good fight, finished the course, and kept the faith. They have maintained our freedom and honored your Sovereignty.

We thank you for the brave American men and women of every generation who have refused to be intimidated by dictators or terrorized by cowards. Bless and encourage our troops today as they defend us against the evil of those who would rob us of your gift. Keep our troops safe, we pray, and give us the privilege of honoring them in this amphitheater in years to come. They are tomorrow's veterans.

Bless all the leaders of our country. In your Infinite Wisdom, guide and direct every difficult deliberation and decision. Give our President and Vice-President, the Cabinet and Congress the insight to weigh the clear and present dangers against the compelling needs. Help them to seek your means to a just conclusion in this War on Terrorism.

And now, Lord, may we celebrate the victories of all American veterans, past, present and future. They have proven our nation's claim that this is still the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Amen.

Prayer offered by Chaplain Cook at Arlington National Cemetery, Veterans Day, November 11, 2001.

The best public prayers avoid embellished language and phrases that are so over worked as to lose meaning. In fact, sometimes an unexpected (yet meaningfully appropriate) “startle effect” will catch the attention of those who are in the habit of dozing off when they hear the words, “Let us pray.” By startle effect, I don’t mean grandstanding or shock effects that cheapen the moment. However, God’s word, which we hope will be uttered in the prayer, cannot be heard if the audience has subconsciously drifted into a sleep mode. The startle effect can sometimes be accomplished simply by being *honest* about how *the chaplain* is thinking and feeling. It is fairly safe to assume that we, and our audience, share the same struggles.

Three days after the terrorist attack on America, and after hours of working and reworking a program to meet the needs of VA Central Office employees, I began my prayer with, “**We are tired, God. We are tired of seeing and hearing of violence, death and destruction. We are tired of the fears that have welled up inside us, and we are tired of the pain.**” It was not the way anyone expected the prayer to begin, but because my audience had just returned into the building after their *second* evacuation in three days, I believe that most identified with those words and decided to listen a little longer.

When we offer public prayer, our job is to facilitate the communication between our audience and their God. We are servants in this process. The goal is not that the audience will compliment the chaplain on how well he/she prayed. The successful public prayer leads the audience to focus far *beyond* the chaplain, to no longer need the chaplain to facilitate such prayer. Symbolically speaking, I imagine that in one hand, I hold God’s hand. In my other hand, I hold the hand of those in the audience. My goal is to place them hand in hand so that my words will lead them to their own.

Finally, the most frequently asked question about public prayer is whether or not the prayer can be concluded “In Jesus’ name,” or can include any other reference to the chaplain’s own faith preference. In worship services of specific faith groups, there is no doubt that the chaplain can and should make the prayer specific to his/her faith group congregation. For more secular programs (as opposed to worship services), the answer must

be found within the heart of the chaplain. I have always found that the foundational themes of my faith can be woven into my prayer in such a way that those in the audience who share my faith recognize them. This allows me to pray with sincerity and integrity to my faith. Yet, I can do this without excluding and offending others. My assumption is that if I am to represent God, then I must do so in ways that unite people and bring them together. The one I am called to represent is not the author of alienation.



*Chaplain Jeni Cook, D.Min.
Department of Veterans Affairs*

We are tired, God. *We are tired of seeing and hearing of violence, death and destruction. We are tired of the fears that have welled up inside us, and we are tired of the pain.*

And Lord, we confess a sense of shame in the truth of these statements, because there are so many others whose suffering is so much greater than our own. But this is our suffering. And we need Your help.

You are a God of grace and mercy and hope, and so we trust in your promise to hear when we cry out to You. And we claim your promise to heal our lives, and heal our land. Let the intensity of our emotions motivate us to participate in the healing You will most certainly bring.

There are dark days ahead, so we ask for Your light. We are grateful that You understand when we can’t help but ask, “Why?” Yet, we also pray... that evil will never make sense to us.

Go with us now, and bless us with the firm conviction, that while evil may win a few of the battles, Your love will ultimately win the final war. In Your Holy Name, we pray. Amen.

Prayer offered by Chaplain Cook on behalf of Veterans Affairs employees at the Department’s central office in Washington D.C., September 14, 2001.

Free Exercise for Whom? More Perspective from the “Accommodation Doctor”

Chaplain Vic Smith, Captain, US Navy retired, launched this column in our November-December 2005 issue. Vic resides in Williamsburg, VA. After thirty years of ministry as a chaplain, he continues to champion the cause of religious liberty and never hesitates to take on the difficult or “messy” questions.

Q: What do you think about the new “Military Chaplain Prayer Law” that is pending passage by the Congress?

A: It looks to me like this law resulted mostly from charges by some chaplains of unjust treatment by their seniors on a variety of levels. I don't believe that it will be good for them in the long run or for the chaplaincy.

Q: What about the chaplain's right to pray as “free exercise of religion”?

A: We need to look more carefully at the meaning of “religious free exercise.” First of all “free exercise” is the privilege of the individual, not of a group or denomination. Secondly, we need to balance this with the practices of others. The words “respect” and “accommodate” are very important elements for thinking about free exercise rights. There is seldom a problem raised during faith group services, since chaplains already have the right to conduct worship according to the practices of his or her own faith group's practices. There may be elements of discretion required even in this setting, because it would be inappropriate to denigrate another faith group.

The offering of traditional public prayers at official functions has other issues. These meetings are not religious services. They are secular. Those who hold a variety of religious beliefs (or none at all) should not be “subjugated” to “join” a prayer to which they do not subscribe. Such prayers must balance the chaplain's “freedom” to pray with the audience's freedom from denominational or faith-group-specific impositions that border on the establishment of religion.

The manner of an invitation to pray should indicate openness rather than a sense of non-acceptance. To invite participation with the words, “Let us pray” implies that all parties should be able to find all elements of the prayer acceptable to follow. If a chaplain “must” make the prayer denominational, at least the invitation to listen or participate should allow parallel prayers rather than concurrence.

Chaplains are professional staff officers as well as denominational agents. Can't they find common elements for those who hear their prayers in military ceremonies? When endorsers put forth their applicants for chaplaincy, they certify that their candidates are suited for a broader ministry than the denominational setting.

With this agreement in mind, what constitutes an offense to the chaplain? And when does a denominationally required prayer provoke offense to participants in a public event? If this issue remains a sticking point for chaplains, I can foresee the disappearance of invocations and

benedictions at military ceremonies. Losers in the dispute are the troops.

Q: What do you think about the fact that the Prayer Law does not address the praying of anyone else in the military?

A: What are the new rules for a civilian minister or a lay leader that is invited to pray at a ceremony? What about a unit commander that might pray in the absence of a chaplain? And what about a military member who is ordained but not a chaplain, who would be only too happy to provide an invocation if asked? These people are not covered by this change to Title 10 United States Code.

If prayer needed to be protected, why not extend the protection to all that pray? Why is it necessary to create a special form of protected and nearly untrammelled speech for chaplains, who already have denominational rights in worship services?

....continued on page 12



Chaplain Vic Smith

Q: You have said part of the issue is “framing.” What do you mean by that?

A: George Lakoff, Professor of Linguistics at University of California, Berkeley explains that “Language always comes with what is called “framing.” Every word is defined relative to a conceptual framework. If you have something like “revolt,” that implies a population that is being ruled unfairly, or assumes it is being ruled unfairly, and that they are throwing off their rulers, which would be considered a good thing. That’s a “frame.”

Everybody “knows” what prayer is. There is agreement that everyone should be free to pray. But if one compares the mental picture of what prayer is from different faith (or non-faith) backgrounds, the contrasts are as striking as are the similarities. In a public (and sometimes required) military group setting, free exercise provisions of the Constitution are supposed to be assisted by having chaplains. These clergy are “borrowed” from civilian faith groups and given access and uniforms to do their “jobs.” They are expected to meet or at least safeguard the diverse needs of the audience, in whose behalf the prayers are offered.

Certainly chaplains can experience tension between promulgating their personal prayer proclivities and speaking in the name of most, if not all, of those who are invited to pray “along.” “Let us pray?” or “Let me pray?” In a denominationally specific worship setting, the disparity disappears because people there tend to have the same mental picture of what a prayer should look and sound like. In a public venue, the co-pray-ers are as important as the leader on the podium, but the pictures of what prayer is supposed to be may be quite different.

If the frame is freedom of prayer for the chaplain, which is a “no-brainer,” what is free exercise for the audience? If a chaplain considers that “in Jesus’ name” is a requirement for a prayer to be valid, what does that imply for those listeners who pray without that addendum? Or who pray to Allah, or Shiva, or ...?

Q: Any parting thoughts?

A: Chaplains as government agents take seriously their charge to promote free exercise of religion. They do not give up their own rights to worship, but do not have the right to impose on others without being invited. As chaplains/officers, they are part of

...In a public venue, the co-pray-ers are as important as the leader on the podium...

the establishment. And, they are the only agents in the military with “privileged communication” as a primary tool. The privilege, which belongs to the appellant, is uniquely protected at all times for military personnel.

As insiders, chaplains go where members go, share in experiences, provide on-scene spiritual, moral and human support for those in their charge, teach, preach, bless and pray for and with their “flock” in peace or in war, at home or in far away places. Chaplains are denominational agents, but they are also government agents. Their purpose is to bless those to whom they provide ministry and pastoral care, and all under the First Amendment provisions of the Constitution. What a special combination! What a balancing act! What a privilege to provide Free Exercise to those serving their country!

The new prayer law that has been proposed is likely to increase, rather than diminish the tension already visible. It acts as a polarizing element of power and privilege, which was bad enough without it. Better to cure the cause than to treat a symptom that will only recur in a different and more fatal form later because of the unintended consequences of the treatment for the wrong problem.



Chaplain Smith in ecumenical worship aboard USS Missouri (BB-63) c. 1987.

Chaplain of the Year For the Kansas Wing Civil Air Patrol

Chaplain, Major Jon Lumanog, CAP was honored as the Kansas Wing Chaplain of the Year earlier this year. Chaplain Lumanog resides in Prairie Village, KS with his wife (Amie) and daughter (Ainsley). Jon serves the New Century Composite Squadron in New Century, KS. This squadron, one of 14 in Kansas, includes 38 officers and 27 students in the Cadet Program. Jon conducts monthly Moral Leadership training, confidential counseling for people of all faiths or no faith, and stands ready for emergency response ministry.

Chaplain Lumanog's background is a fascinating model of preparation for ministry in a multi-faith, cross-cultural, and on-line digital age environment. Jon graduated from a Baptist High School in Hoboken, NJ and then attended Cornell College (founded with Methodist affiliation) in Mount Vernon, IA. He received the Master of Divinity degree from St. Paul Theological College (Reformed tradition) in Spring Hill, FL. His Doctor of Ministry degree is from Andersonville Theological Seminary (Baptist background) in Camilla, GA.



Chaplain Lumanog delivering an invocation at an awards banquet for Cadets. To his left is Major Ron Behm, Squadron Public Affairs Officer.

Jon has worked as General Manager of a radio station in Cedar Rapids, IA and the Director of Programming and Operations for another station in Kansas City, MO.

Jon joined the Civil Air Patrol in 2005. He has completed the basic CAP Officer Course at the Air Force's Air University, three

levels of the CAP Professional Development Program, the Cadet Protection Program, and the 2006 Staff College at Offutt AFB.

Chaplain Lumanog is in transition as an Anglican Priest with pending reception in the Anglican Mission in America. He has served churches as Archdeacon to the Bishop, Interim Rector (Senior Pastor), Worship Pastor, District Evangelist, and Home Missionary-in-Training at an inner-city church.



Chaplain Lumanog teaching a monthly Moral Leadership class.

The Anglican Mission in America relies on "umbrella endorsers" for participation in chaplaincy. Jon is covered at present by Chaplaincy Full Gospel Churches.

Chaplain Lumanog also works as the Advertising Director for the *National Catholic Reporter* in Kansas City.



I am very enthusiastic about my ministry with CAP as a Chaplain and have been blessed a great deal by being a part of my Squadron. I was selected as the 2005 Kansas Wing Chaplain of the Year for Civil Air Patrol out of some 14 squadrons in Kansas! Also, this is my first year of service in CAP so this is a great honor for me personally.

It is a blessing to be a part of this great group like MCA. Thank you so much for the encouraging news that is sent to me regularly and for allowing me to be a part.

Chaplain Jon Lumanog



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“Chaplain for Life” Honored for Community Relief Initiative

Chaplain Lamar Hunt of Ocala, FL created “Operation Stuff the Bus” in March 2002. The first drive began in July that year. In four years, OSTB has collected over \$200,000 in new school supplies and monetary donations for homeless and other children in need. Lamar is retired Army, Life Member of the MCA, and a frequent contributor to ministry for general community needs as well as military and Veterans.



On behalf of OSTB, Chaplain Hunt receives a “check” for \$13,333 from county employees. Left: Marion County Commissioner Charlie Stone. Center: Suzanne McGuire, Homeless Children Liaison.



Florida State Representative Dennis Baxley presents Chaplain Hunt with an American Flag recently flown over the capital of Florida. Rep. Baxley hosted an appreciation luncheon where the presentation was made.

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MCA and the Veterans Affairs Department chaplaincy will co-locate.

We are working arrangements with the Holiday Inn Riverwalk in San Antonio. Mark the window of 14-19 May 2007 on your calendar. Look for more details in the November-December issue of the *Military Chaplain*.