

Dear Chaplains and Commanders,

Well these sure are different days.

Regaining Perspective . . .

In his book *Living Life on Purpose*, Greg Anderson shares the story of one man's journey to joy:

... his wife had left him and he was completely depressed. He had lost faith in himself, in other people, in God--he found no joy in living.

One rainy morning this man went to a small neighborhood restaurant for breakfast. Although several people were at the diner, no one was speaking to anyone else. Our miserable friend hunched over the counter, stirring his coffee with a spoon.

In one of the small booths along the window was a young mother with a little girl. They had just been served their food when the little girl broke the sad silence by almost shouting, "Momma, why don't we say our prayers here?"

The waitress who had just served their breakfast turned around and said, "Sure, honey, we pray here. Will you say the prayer for us?" And she turned and looked at the rest of the people in the restaurant and said, "Bow your heads."

Surprisingly, one by one, the heads went down. The little girl then bowed her head, folded her hands, and said, "God is great, God is good, and we thank him for our food. Amen."

That prayer changed the entire atmosphere. People began to talk with one another. The waitress said, "We should do that every morning."

"All of a sudden," said our friend, "my whole frame of mind started to improve. From that little girl's example, I started to thank God for all that I did have and stop majoring in all that I didn't have. I started to choose happiness." -- *Leadership*, Vol. 17, no. 4.

Let's give thanks to God for one another and for all that we have.

Act as a Seasoned Veteran – Not as a Rookie

During the six years I served as a Chaplain at Baylor University Medical Center in Dallas, Texas, I observed how most seasoned physicians handled trauma cases in the Emergency Room compared to some young physicians who recently graduated from medical school. The seasoned veteran physicians remained calm, and thoughtfully and purposefully responded to the crisis situations, even though he or she may not have encountered that particular injury or trauma case before. In stark contrast, many times the rookie physician's anxiety and manor of operation added more stress and chaos to the emergency. As a result of my experiences as a Chaplain at Baylor, almost every time as I am about to

face a family, or encounter a crisis, or lead a service, I repeat these words and tell myself, “act like a Seasoned Veteran - not a Rookie!” I encourage you to do the same.

Serving those who served and providing care as a chaplain is an act of kindness and love. As you enter situations let's strive to provide the best care we can and remember to always be a calming presence in the midst of chaos and anxiety.

National Chaplain Event Planned for May 15-17, 2020 - Has been cancelled

Unfortunately because of the virus situation the National Chaplain Weekend retreat which was scheduled to take place May 15-17, 2020 in Gettysburg, PA, has been cancelled and will not be rescheduled.

Our plan is to continue the tradition of honoring our VFW National Chaplain and holding a retreat for chaplains next year on Armed Forces weekend, May 14-16, 2021. Put it on your calendar now and sometime during the year check with your Post about helping to defray your expenses.

Online Reporting System for Chaplains

For those who are not familiar with the reporting system, simply click on this link and it will take you directly to the reporting system. VFW Chaplains are encouraged to report their activity at the end of each month using this reporting system. Once you submit your report you will receive an email containing the data you submitted. That email can then be forwarded to your District Chaplain, State Chaplain, or Department if your state has a reporting system in place. It can also be forwarded to your Post and included in the Post Community Service Report.

Again, to submit your Chaplain's Report please use this link. Don't forget to hit SUBMIT at the bottom of the form.

Resources for Chaplains

The Chaplains Handbook: The Chaplains Handbook can be accessed by clicking on this link: [https://www.vfwpahq.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/2018-0710-Revised-Chaplains-Handbook - 3.pdf](https://www.vfwpahq.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/2018-0710-Revised-Chaplains-Handbook-3.pdf) It is also posted on the VFW National Website https://vfworg-cdn.azureedge.net/-/media/VFWSite/Files/MY_VFW/Training-and-Support/Member-and-Officer-Training/Chaplains-Handbook.pdf?la=en&v=1&d=20180801T143458Z

Other Resources: There are other resources available to help you in your ministry on my Chaplain's Page at the PA Department Web Site - vfwpahq.org Just look under District/Post Tools and you will see Chaplain's Guide. Here is the direct link: <https://www.vfwpahq.org/districtpost-tools/chaplains-guide/>

If you have something that would benefit others in our network, please send it to me.
Remember, I am praying for you and I am here to help if needed.

Blessings as you serve,

Rev. Peter R. Hook

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