

On 24 March 2010, I was overwhelmed by God's grace and the expectation of the Episcopal Church, as I was selected as the next Bishop Suffragan for Federal Ministries. The responsibility and scope of this dynamic office is awesome and to assume I could shepherd this exciting flock for our Lord and Savior and for the Church is very humbling. I am pleased to take this opportunity to address the importance of Federal Chaplains, my expectations and vision for the role of Bishop Suffragan.

One could easily say I am passionate about our priests who serve in the Federal Chaplain Corps as these men and women are the "visible reminder of the Holy" in very pluralistic and diverse environments. In my perspective, they are on the front lines! These well-trained Federal Chaplains bring hope, healing and the resurrected reality of our Lord Jesus as they serve. Veteran Affairs Federal Chaplains move from ministering at bedsides, to counseling with veteran amputees, bringing hope and healing. The Federal Prison Chaplains meet the inmates where they are and bring hope and healing to those incarcerated. The military chaplains, serving in uniform without weapons, bring hope and healing to men and women in uniform on land, in the air or at sea.

Before becoming a Federal Military Chaplain during combat as an Airman, I have been on the receiving end of these dedicated, loving, caring Episcopal Federal Chaplains. Knowing there is a chaplain with you in those extreme situations brings more than hope -- it brings the reality of something bigger, the love of the One, the Lord, who gives meaning and hope!

It might assist the reader for me to share brief remarks of personal history. I was born into an Air Force family, on an Air Force base and my father as an American, flew Spitfires for the British in WW II. I have served over 30 years on active duty in the USAF, both as an officer and as a chaplain. Of my two daughters, one attended a military university and the other serves as an Air Force officer. In the past, when I have been deployed or in harm's way, my own family has been the receivers of the support and hope given by Episcopal Federal Chaplains.

My vision is we need Federal Chaplains in the military who are comfortable operating on the edge, who can function being deployed suddenly into harm's way; we need Federal Chaplains in VA hospitals, who are comfortable living in those "holy and sacred" moments, holding the vet's hand when told "Sorry, we will have to amputate the other limb," or as that honored veteran even dies. We need Federal Prison Chaplains who hear the slamming of the gate behind them and can do ministry for those in solitary confinement and walk the "long mile." Federal Chaplains can be guaranteed a very exciting stimulating, awesome, priesthood living in those frequent and awe-filled "sacred and holy" moments of the lives of those they serve. It is tough, highly satisfying, demanding ministry and I would not trade my years of experience as a Federal chaplain, as a military chaplain. If you see yourself called to the challenge of any of these exciting ministries of priesthood -- you need to be a Federal chaplain.

My personal responsibilities, as Bishop Suffragan include the recruiting and mentoring of Federal Chaplains and the nurture, love and support for their families and loved ones, regardless of where they are stationed and serve. Additionally, there is a number of peculiar congregations worldwide existing on Federal installations that have functioned under the

assumed jurisdiction of this office. The office must also continue to remain nimble enough to meet unexpected crises with ministries.

Military Chaplains have a challenging vocation as Federal Chaplains, as they serve as officers in uniform, but not officers with command authority. Military Chaplains are not combatants, but they do walk with the warriors. Additionally, these priests are further challenged as they are under the oversight of the "Protestant Program," and they will rub shoulders with all faith groups, learning to accentuate their common ground, as they honor their diversity of polity and faith.

One of my expectations and visions is to ensure all Federal Chaplains of the separate branches can be much more to each other and use that synergy to build more for the Kingdom and the Church. We can create a counsel of advisors from each Federal Ministry branch which can stabilize the collegiality of the community of the Chaplains as well as the communities they serve. With more horizontal and vertical communication, there will be the opportunities for the Federal Chaplains to be more than they already are.

The Bishop Suffragan, as a member of the House of Bishops, is responsible to the Presiding Bishop, the House and the Church to follow the canons of our faith as well as the common direction of our Church. The Bishop Suffragan is further responsible to the Federal Chaplains, to ensure, they too, understand and are knowledgeable of the turns, changes and life of the Episcopal Church and how to communicate that dialogue within their ministry. Conversely, the House of Bishops needs to hear the 'ongoing story' in the lives of senior military, Veteran Affairs Hospital and Federal Prison leadership. This dual dialogue, can and will assist the further sharing of the Gospel and expanding the ministry of the Church.

Am grateful for having had this opportunity to exchange in this forum and am very thankful to our Lord for this responsibility to serve Him and the Church in this capacity. God bless! CMA+

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