



Cowlitz Chaplaincy

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*A non-profit organization serving Emergency Service Responders
and Citizens since 1983*

Volume 10

Issue Number 6

December 2013



Chaplain Mario Gambaro 1-H-8

Who Cares for the Care Giver?

As we have provided comfort and care, to our Law enforcement, Fire and Rescue, Coroners, EMS personnel, Dispatchers and to our community, our own lives continue to live out. The compassion that we pour into each circumstance doesn't eliminate the life changing events that happen in our own personal lives.

As we have responded to the 260 call-outs in 2012-2013, we have provided a ministry of "presence and availability" to our county. The 260 call-outs represents 260 events that have life changing impacts on the lives of surviving family members and many times to the responders who have committed themselves to the event. All the while, our own lives continue to unfold as we live out our faith.

When responding to the events in lives of others, we have learned to separate our own pain from the pain that others are experiencing in their grief. We are able to do this solely on the power of the Holy Spirit who lifts us up. We as Chaplains Look first to Jesus, and then to each other and our communities of faith for support. We have learned to shed our own tears of grief. We have learned to shed tears of grief for those we have privileged to respond to.

2012-2013 has been a time of personal pain for our Chaplains. Chaplain Flip Eiland suffered the loss of his father and his mother in law, Chaplain Tom Haan suffered the sudden loss of his father, Chaplain Doug Fields has been dealing with family and personal health issues and I have felt the sting of life in the loss of my mother and the sudden loss of our daughter.

I share this not to elicit sympathy, but to celebrate with you that our Lord has been faithful to us in our circumstances!

Our God doesn't waste pain!

In each case I have watched my Chaplains walk through their circumstances guided by their individual faith. I praise God for these men of faith; I praise God for their wives, who daily lift them up in their prayers. Most of

all I praise Our Lord, whose loving grace has abounded in each of our circumstances, teaching us each step of the way.

As the year unfolds and the holidays are upon us Jesus reminds us that for many this will be that first Christmas, New Year, Birthday, Anniversary or other significant family event without the presence of a loved one who will be greatly missed.

Pray for our community, our first responders and Your Chaplains.

Lamentations 3:20-24

*²⁰ I well remember them,
and my soul is downcast
within me.*

*²¹ Yet this I call to mind
and therefore I have hope:*

*²² Because of the LORD's great
love we are not consumed,
for his compassions never fail.*

*²³ They are new every morning;
great is your faithfulness.*

*²⁴ I say to myself, "The LORD
is my portion;
therefore I will wait for him."*

1Corinthians 15:57-58

*⁵⁷ But thanks be to God! He
gives us the victory through
our Lord Jesus Christ.*

*⁵⁸ Therefore, my dear brothers
and sisters, stand firm. Let
nothing move you. Always*

give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

We at the Chaplaincy want to thank you for your faithful prayers and support.

Have a very Merry Christmas and a Blessed New Year

Chaplain Mario



Chaplain Tom Haan 1-H-15

Jesus is the First Responder

“Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death, he might destroy him who holds the power of death – that is the devil – and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.”

Hebrews 2: 14-15 (NIV)

A few months ago I was called out at night to a horrible tragedy. Two teenage girls were hit by a vehicle, and one of the girls lay dead in the road. Her broken-hearted father came up to me, and cried out, “They (the Sheriff

Deputies) will not let me go up there and be with her. I just want to go be by my daughter and pray over her.” He was helpless and powerless to save his daughter’s life, and now he was helpless and powerless to be near her. One father to another, one Christian to another, one Chaplain to a powerless man, I said to him, “They will not let you go up there, but they will let me go up there.” So mindful and respectful of the duties of the Deputies, I made my way through the battalion of emergency vehicles and personnel to a few feet of a young woman whose life had come to a violent and sudden end. I got on one knee in that sacred place and prayed over her. As I prayed I could feel that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit were all there. The guardian angel, and leader the heavenly host, Michael was also there. The devil had no presence there, and death held no power over that place.

According to the good news of the gospel Jesus said, “No one else can go down there, but I can go there. As God, I will take on flesh and blood and win the victory they cannot win.” Since we are powerless over sin and death, Jesus was willing to be the first responder. As Chaplains we have the privilege of being mediators for people during their most helpless moments. But it is not who we are or what we do; it is all about who we represent – the infant child who became Lord of all. Because Jesus came at Christmas we have the victory over sin and death. We do not have to live in fear of death because Jesus came to rescue and redeem us from the power of the

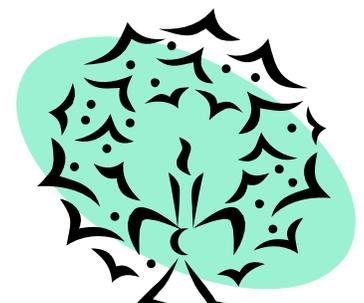
devil. As Chaplains we have the opportunity to share that good news in word, but most of the time, in deed as we minister to other’s in life’s most difficult moments.

In my tradition we learned the Heidelberg Catechism. The first Q&A is, “What is your only comfort in life and in death?”

That I am not my own, but belong, body and soul, in life and in death, to my faithful savior Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and set me free from the tyranny of the devil. He also watches over me in such a way that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my Father in heaven; in fact all things must work together for my salvation. Because I belong to him, Christ, by his Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Blessed 2014.

Chaplain Tom Haan





Chaplain Doug Fields 1-H-16

Merry Christmas!

By the time your receive this newsletter, Christmas will be upon us. My prayer is that you will experience a fresh outpouring of God’s Spirit as you celebrate with Family and Friends the birth of our Lord. I love this time of the season as it is a time in which there is such an outpouring of love and charity in the community as people share with one another.

The chaplains were surprised to be the recipients of one such blessing this month as representatives of the Lower Columbia Association of Realtors, et al, delivered a wonderful basket of goodies to our office after Thanksgiving. It was filled with delicious snacks and beautiful cards from several area realty companies. The cards contained heartwarming expressions of encouragement and thanks which included gift cards to various restaurants in town. We were so touched by their thoughtfulness and generosity. Each year this group which represents the area realtors focuses on sending special expressions of encouragement to

area First responders (law enforcement, coroners, fire agencies, dispatchers and other emergency personnel) as a way of saying thanks for their service. This year the group chose to focus on the Cowlitz Chaplains. What a blessing to live in such a community such as Cowlitz County. Thanks Realtors!!

And speaking of Blessings, by the time you read this, we should have completed our 2013 **Shop with a Cop** program which pairs law enforcement officers with local children to shop for Christmas with each child receiving a sum of money to spend. Through the support of grants from Wal-Mart, General Mills, the Longview Police Benefits Association, The Cowlitz County Deputy Association, the Castle Rock Police Association and other donations over \$5500 was provided to give shopping trips for up to 44 children this Christmas at two different events in Longview. What a heartwarming activity to see children and law enforcement officers shopping , wrapping presents and sharing quality time together supported by employees of our local Wal-Mart stores on 7th Ave and Ocean Beach who provided breakfast and assisted in wrapping presents. Thank you Longview Police , Castle Rock Police, Cowlitz County Sheriff, and the Kelso Police Department for encouraging officers to participate in this special community event.

What a wonderful way to prepare for the coming of our Lord by sharing the blessings of our life with others around us. I hope you are finding ways to bless

your neighbors and friends around this Christmas season.

Chaplain Doug Fields



Season of Little Light...

Coping with the Holidays

A Word from the Chaplains at Cowlitz Chaplaincy.

*As we enter into this Holiday season, We recognize that this can be one of the most difficult times of the year if you have experienced a loss of someone you love. In the midst of celebration, it can be extremely lonely and painful. Here are a few suggestions to take care of one’s self this Holiday taken from ***Rivendell Resources and GriefNet.org**, a bereavement support provider.*

Be Realistic

Decide what you can handle comfortably and let family and friends know. Set limitations. Talk with family members and decide what is the most important. Beware of “shoulds” and “oughts.” Be honest with each other about your feelings. There is no right or wrong way to celebrate holidays. Just do the best you can and lay in a supply of tissue(a roll of toilet paper is even more efficient.)

Re-examine your priorities such as greeting cards, holiday baking, hosting dinners, decorating etc.

Decide if you want to do these things or if you will have the energy. Decide if you really enjoy them. Give yourself permission to share these tasks, not to do them or do something different. Do what means the most to you.

Make some changes if they feel comfortable for you.

Open presents on Christmas Eve instead of Christmas morning. Vary your time of gift giving. Have dinner at a different place or time. Invite children or grandchildren to take over certain activities. Don't be afraid to change some traditions and decide which ones to keep.

Consider doing something special for someone else.

Donate a gift in memory of your loved one. Donate money you would have spent on your loved one as a gift to charity. Adopt a

needy family. Think of some way that honors your loved one. It doesn't mean that you will always have to do it, but for this year it might be helpful.

Recognize your loved one's presence in the family.

Burn a special candle to quietly include your loved one. Hang a stocking for your loved one in which people can put notes with their thoughts or feelings. Listen to music especially like by the decease. Look at photographs at some point. Think of all the “gifts” that your loved one gave you and list them on strips of paper and keep them close to you. Some people have put them in a gift box, or have decorated the tree with them or put them in a stocking.

Allow yourself to express your feelings.

Know that Holidays often will magnify feelings of loss. It is natural to feel sadness. Don't be afraid to share your feelings with others around you. Know that heartaches will be unpacked as you sift through the decorations. Don't deny yourself the gift of healing tears. Know that you may have moments of despair and sleepless nights. But you can live through the hurt.

Keep in mind the feelings of your children and grandchildren.

If you have young children, try to make the holiday as joyous as possible for them. Remember children process their grief

differently than you do. They may feel sadness yet still look forward to some normalcy such as gifts, “Santa” etc.

Don't isolate yourself. Consider attending religious services and programs even if it brings tears.

Some people fear crying in public. Its okay. Do not push the tears down, Crying may just what you need to do. It is healthy. It is a sign of your love. Just be gentle with yourself and not expect too much. Your tears may give permission for other family members to experience the same freedom. No matter what Share the Holiday with someone!!!

Decide in advance how you will answer “Happy Holidays?”

”Will you just answer “I'll Try” or will something more generic like “best wishes to you”. Having an answer prepared will help reduce the anxiety of how you will address people when they share Holiday greetings.

Don't Forget, often the anticipation of any holiday can be much worse than the actual holiday according to the wisdom of many who have experienced loss through the holidays. You may be surprised at how well you do. Regardless the actual experience may be less painful (according to many who have lost loved ones) than what you imagined.

Keep in mind that though your experience of the Holidays has been forever changed by the loss of your loved one, almost all bereaved persons will come to enjoy Holidays again someday. You will one day find joy in experiencing the holidays. It may not be this year or the next, but it will come. Hang on to that hope!! And don't be afraid

to let laughter and joy sneak into your life. Give yourself and your family permission to laugh when memories are shared. Sharing the feelings and memories can lessen the pain.

Be healthy! Remember grieving is hard work. The holidays can be emotionally, physically and psychologically

draining. You need your strength. Try to get enough rest. Also stay away from drugs and other substances that can be addictive. And remember to set your boundaries in areas of finance. Put the wallet or purse away. Now is not the time to spend lots of money.

**WE WISH YOU A
MERRY CHRISTMAS!
AND A
HAPPY NEW YEAR!**