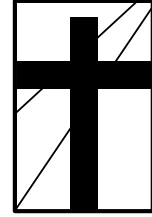


The Chaplain's Chapter



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CHAPLAINCY

Chaplaincy refers to the office of being a Chaplain. The word "chaplain" does not appear in the Bible. I recall being told years ago that the title "Chaplain" meant "The keeper of the Chapel." That is just historically wrong.

The word "Chaplain" did not come from the word "Chapel." Rather, it came from a Latin word "Capellanus," meaning "CAPE." The real roots of the term "Chaplain" goes back to the early Christian Era, when a devout Christian man looked out his window and saw a derelict shivering in the cold. Moved by Christ's compassion, he went down to the man and covered him with his own cape (his "capellanus") and brought him indoors where it was warm and safe, and fed him.

Growing out of this example, many early Christian ministers took special pity on those in danger of death or deprivation and offered them Christ's love in tangible ways. The idea grew to a point that those who ministered God's word and hope to those in imminent peril (the sick, the soldiers, victims of natural disasters, the suffering panhandlers on skid row and terminally ill patients in hospice care and convalescent homes) were called "Chaplains." The most basic idea relating back to the cape incident was that of **SHOWING OUR LORD'S COMPASSION**. Chaplains today, therefore, are not necessarily clergy attached to a particular church or denomination (other than Christian) or building. Some Chaplains have "street" or motorcycle ministries. Some work in corporate settings and locales. Some are committed to hospitals or in-home hospice care. Some, Like the USCOC work primarily for our active military, Veterans, their families and our communities.

For those of you who have wondered why my email name starts with Chaplain now, it's because of my involvement in the United States Corps of Chaplains, and the fact that a large part of my email correspondence and posting to forums is with fellow members and officers. About 2 years ago, in a similar message, I testified as to God's tugging at me to do more with, and for, Veterans and their families. As most of you know, last fall I became a member of the USCOC. I can honestly say to you that little in my 30 years of ordination has brought me farther in my walk with Christ than in my short tenure in the USCOC. I am so proud of what my fellow members (and others who help us) do towards our mission to Nurture the living, Care for the dying, and Honor the dead. I don't believe that there exists any finer organization, with any purer purpose - to minister to all. And in the Corps, we don't use "civilian" titles like Rev. or Dr., even though we may well be. And, although you may still get church or other emails signed that way; if I don't delete my signature and type in something else on an email to you, you will see the one I use the most these days...

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United States Corps of Chaplains
"AID...HONOR...COMFORT"

**Please visit the United States Corps of Chaplains website at
www.uscochq.com and think about joining us.**