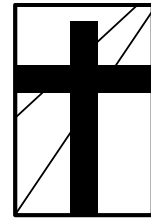


The Chaplain's Chapter



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MINISTRY

Everyone has a ministry. Each one of us has been given gifts which are unfolded and revealed to us as we progress along life's path. Sometimes we recognize them differently, perhaps as a job, or a set of circumstances which has us raising someone else's children. Senator Ted Kennedy, who just passed recently, certainly had a ministry. Whether you were liberal or conservative, democrat or republican, you had to appreciate the fact that he was father to many nieces and nephews (20, I believe), and that he used his gifts for purposes bigger than himself. God doesn't promise that everyone is going to agree with us, just because our cause is just. Quite the contrary, he says we will be persecuted. In John, 16:33 he says "*These things I have spoken to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.*"

In the Chaplaincy, we claim a "ministry of presence". In other words, sometimes we make a difference just by being somewhere. When you are gathering at the graveside of a loved one for instance, you are comforted by the site of the priest or minister, are you not? At a homeless Veterans outreach (or Stand Down as they are called), I am always impressed by the Vets who just want to strike a stance and offer me a salute, talk for a minute, have me pray with or for them or someone else, share a joke or tag along for awhile. They don't know me. But, they know I'm a Chaplain.

It's the same with your "ministry". That is whatever God has put in your heart and in front of you that you find yourself focusing on the most. It could be a relative with a substance abuse problem, a grandchild who has come to know you in the role of parent, a company or corporation you have been chosen to lead, being the deacon in your church, the president of a community service or fraternal organization, or the policeman, fireman, electrician, plumber, mechanic or computer expert in your neighborhood everyone comes to for help. Or, being the best Mom or Dad in the world as far as your son or daughter is concerned. So, if you agree that you have one, the challenge becomes how to magnify your ministry. You've got one, now what do you do with it? We each have the opportunity to minister by example. And do with it you must. As Yoda of Star Wars fame once said, "DO OR DO NOT. THERE IS NO TRY". And, as Romans 11:29 says, "*For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.*" If there is ever anything I can do to help you in your ministry, please do not hesitate to contact me. And I mean this for each one of the hundreds of people who read this devotional each month. I am as close as the phone or the keyboard. After all, that's part of *my* ministry. May God continue to bless you in your ever closer walk with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Chaplain Alex Brandon
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"AID...HONOR...COMFORT"

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