

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Grateful simply to still be alive....

By **CHAPLAIN (BRIG. GEN.) PATRICK DOLAN**

ARNG-Asst. to Chief of Chaplains

Many of you know that I was born in an orphanage from two college students after World War II, and was a prime candidate for abortion. Instead, my blood parents, whom I have never met, let me live and be adopted as an infant.

However, the couple who had been waiting years for a baby was not told that a baby boy was available because there was an epidemic of dysentery in the hospital and the Nurse-Sisters weren't sure I was going to live.

Five weeks later, they called my new parents on St. Patrick's Day to tell them I could be theirs. That's how I got my name Patrick, for which I am truly grateful. As chaplains we are called not only to be grateful, but to help others be grateful even in the most difficult times and circumstances – like combat.

My adopted parents grew up in the Depression era and had to wait seven years to get married because my new mother was the oldest child and the only one employed in a family of 10 and my new dad couldn't take that income away from them. Needless to say, every time I did not want to eat what was on my plate I got a long lecture about how my aunts and uncles, who when they were my age, would have been grateful for

what I was wasting.

The size piece of meat (particularly steak) one gets in a mess hall these days would have served our family of four completely. We ate lots of good vegetables and only got sweets on birthdays or holidays. Even after my dad lost his job because his boss changed, when I was in grade school we were grateful for the years he had a job – and grateful he was still able to look for one.

He could have been killed in traffic (as our next door neighbor's dad was) or dropped by a heart attack (as across the street) or even killed in combat (as two of my cousins were). We were just grateful he was still alive. Perhaps God was training me to be a chaplain without my knowing it.

In the late 1980s, when I was a new chaplain, the song, "God Bless the USA" by Lee Greenwood was particularly popular with us. This was especially true when we were deployed (and homesick).

But it is a story of a farmer who has gone bankrupt and is losing his home and business – and is still grateful that he lives in the USA "where at least I know I'm free." It is that positive attitude that we are called to bring to our folks facing difficult economic times because of the 11 days of furloughs this year – amounting to a four percent pay cut. We can do it.

Even though no one wanted sequestration to occur, and even though you all prayed intensely for Congress to come together to find a way around it (as I begged you to do

last summer), we can gripe about the 11 days off without pay or we can encourage folks to be grateful that they still have a job at all.

One summer when I was cutting steel in a warehouse outside Chicago for \$1.75 an hour, we had a power outage and were sent home without pay that day. Some griped about having come into work and been sent home without pay, but some of us enjoyed getting the day off – and were grateful that we still had jobs (that it wasn't a fire in the company or explosion and we could come back to work the next day). As chaplains we are called to inspire good attitudes – like that of the farmer in "God Bless the USA."

Like all struggles, the sequestration will pass and we can all be grateful simply to be alive – particularly when we remember on Memorial Day those who are no longer alive because they paid the ultimate price for the freedom that we treasure.

One might ask about those who live from paycheck to paycheck and cannot afford even this tiny loss of income (4 percent). Having blessings means that we share those blessings with our fellow Soldiers. Commanders have a number of options such as Army Emergency Relief and other parallel sources in the community.

Within the National Guard, many of us work for companies that have need of an "extra hand" once in a while.

So, how about getting someone hired for that one day a month they are losing tech-

nician pay? How about tapping into other community resources like church or civic helping agencies?

As military we already get very reasonable health insurance and some extra economic perks like discounts. Where is the command guidance helping our most vulnerable Soldiers and their Families find out where the benefits are and helping them know how to use these benefits well? Can we help others translate a positive attitude into positive steps to help?

Though no one wanted sequestration and its economic consequences, it is here because our elected leaders failed to find a way to stop it. Despite that fact, I suspect that each one of us is still grateful we live in the USA.

As chaplains we are truly called to encourage our fellow Soldiers – starting with our own chaplain assistants – to find ways beyond this present struggle and to help one another in the process. We are all called to encourage others to do what is right.

Keep up that call. Be assured of my prayers and support as each of you does this for your own fellow chaplains and assistants and candidates – and for those in your commands.

Blessings be yours as the Independence Day weekend opens up into a great summer for you and your family – one on which you will look back and be grateful simply to be alive!

CAMP SHELBY AREA WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The following worship opportunities are available through Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center.

ON POST General Protestant
Sunday, 9 a.m., Greer Chapel
Sunday, 12:30 p.m., Greer Chapel

Catholic Mass
Saturday, 2 p.m., Greer Chapel

(Confessions at 1:30 p.m.)
Sunday, 2 p.m., Greer Chapel
(Confessions at 1:30 p.m.)

For Jewish, Latter-day Saints and Muslim services, please contact the Post Chaplain for assistance at 558-2378.

Lutheran
Sunday, 8 a.m., St. John Lutheran

Church, 2001 Hardy Street, 601-583-4898.

OFF POST
*Transportation provided for Jewish, Episcopal, Lutheran, Muslim services ONLY (due to time scheduling) Units are responsible for arranging transportation by calling 601-558-2622.

Latter-day Saints
Sunday, 9 a.m., Latter-day Saints Meeting House, 1618 Broadway Dr., 601-268-2438/ Hall: 601-268-9706. Contact the Post Chaplain.

Episcopal
Sunday, 8 a.m., Trinity Episcopal, 509 West Pine St., 601-544-5551

Jewish
Friday at Temple B'Nai Israel at 801

Mamie Street, 601-545-3871. Every Friday at 6 p.m.

Muslim
Contact Post Chaplain

Others
Church of God at Bellevue, Hwy. 589, Hattiesburg
Jesus Christ of LDS, 2215 Broadway Drive, Hattiesburg

Proper ladder safety is important

By **SGT. 1ST CLASS CECIL WILSON**
CSJFTC Installation Safety Office

Ladders are useful tools that, when used properly, serve as a safety system for climbing. Working at an elevated height is inherently dangerous and the safety afforded by a ladder is often circumvented by misuse.

Each year more than 300 deaths are More than 160,000 people are injured

as a result of falls from ladders due to not following safety precautions. Most injuries are cuts, bruises and fractures. Common factors contributing to falls are; haste, sudden movement, poor quality of footwear and lack of attention. However, the number one cause of ladder accidents is overreach. Making a mistake while using a ladder can change or end your life.

Ladders are built from one of three

basic materials; wood, fiberglass and aluminum. The environment of your work site is the first factor in choosing the material from which your ladder is constructed. For example, if you are working near sources of electricity, a metal ladder should not be used, since aluminum is an effective electrical conductor. Next, consider the duty rating of the ladder. This is an indication of the maximum weight capacity the ladder can safely carry. To figure out

the total amount of weight your ladder will be supporting, add your weight plus protective equipment that you will be wearing. Also, add the weight of tools and supplies you are carrying and the weight of tools and supplies stored on the ladder.

There are five categories of ladder duty ratings:

- Type IAA (special duty) 375

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