Royal Australian Army
Chaplains Department

Positioned to Serve

AUSTRALIAN ARMY CHAPLAINCY JOURNAL

FIT FOR PURPOSE!

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Cover Photograph: *Operation Tonga Assist 2022*
Republic of Fiji Military Forces officer Major Jiuta Baleisolomone (left) and Australian Army Chaplain Mau Monu survey the damage on Nomuka Island during Operation Tonga Assist 2022.
Photographer: LSIS Daniel Goodman http://images.defence.gov.au/20220307ran8620187_0176.jpg

Royal Australian Army Chaplains Department

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Editorial

Chaplain Stephen Brooks, CSM

I consider myself fortunate and blessed for having served in the Australian Army since 1994. It has been a journey of great privilege, one that has allowed me to be invited into the lives of many, to share both their joys and the struggles of what it means to be human. As I look back on my service as a Chaplain, I am heartened for the opportunities given to me, noting they were not always without sacrifice. Being able to walk alongside soldiers as they negotiated life's challenges also taught and realigned my thinking. In my naiveté or arrogance, I thought my role was to provide them with the answers, in time, I realised it was to help them ask the right questions.

The cover of this year's Journal captures the profound nature of military chaplaincy and its unique role beyond the temporal order. In amongst the overwhelming devastation caused by the eruption of the Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha'apai volcano and subsequent tsunami (Tonga 2022); Republic of Fiji Military Forces detachment commander Major Jiuta Baleisolomone stands with an Australian Army Chaplain, Mau Monu, surveying the damage on Nomuka Island. As two proud Pacific Islanders, they are deeply affected by the suffering inflicted upon their loved ones. Yet the Chaplain's presence is one of gentle resolve, in the belief that though they may not have all the answers to human suffering, their faith will provide them with a spiritual vitality (Jn 13:15) to bring honour to the dead, comfort to the sick, hope to those in distress and support to a traumatised nation.

In contrast, the once secure place of traditional religion within western society must now justify its relevance and position against competing priorities. Notably there are calls for Governments to stop or limit funding to independent schools, hospitals, and community services with religious affiliations and by association-inferred exclusivity. Similarly, the vocation of chaplaincy once understood as providing pastoral care to all, can no longer rely on past goodwill for current validation. The irony of course is that religion is not simply limited to matters about theisms. In fact, one is not over stretching the meaning to also incorporate its modern or informal version as those who pursue an interest with great devotion, be that; consumerism, conservatism, environmentalism, rationalism, or whatever becomes central to one's existence, even the adoration of sport!

The Journal is therefore not posing a question of whether religious chaplaincy is still relevant (noting its undeniable role in supporting Whole of Government's engagement within the southwest pacific region), but moreover, does it remain fit for purpose? The Australian Army has begun to address the need for more diversity in supporting emerging faith groups, increase in female participation, together with better understanding the pastoral care needs of those who are non-affiliated to a faith group. As a consequence, the existence of, support to, and belief in the viability of something depends on whether it can serve the needs of all, both temporal and religious. Drawn from a service that has evolved and grown over 100 years to meet new challenges and demands, this year's theme Fit for Purpose, is not a question to ask but rather a statement to ponder!

Prologue: Enduring Fitness

PRINCHAP Darren Jaensch, AM

Chaplain Darren Jaensch is a Lutheran pastor serving at Holy Cross Lutheran Parish, Belconnen ACT. He is former Director General Chaplaincy – Army and currently provides Reserve support (SERCAT3) to the Office of DGCHAP-A.

I wonder how those chaplains, strategically formalising an Army chaplaincy department and capability for the Australian military in anticipation of impending global conflict in 1913, would have viewed and evaluated the ADF's chaplaincy capability in 2023?

110 years of service inevitably encounters and necessitates a significant amount of societal and organisational evolution, which our beloved RAAChD has likewise embraced through these ensuing years. Of course, there are some things which endure, and should forever be at the heart of this chaplaincy capability and each of its practitioners (chaplains):

- spiritually informed and mature understanding of the human condition;
- pastoral heart for people as people, not merely capability;
- person-centred approach to their nurture;
- sense of "calling" or motivation beyond - the temporal, personal convenience, or the pursuit of a "military career" (a powerful dynamic for care not fully understood by many);
- willingness to be positioned to serve our people and organisation, including sharing their conditions, hardships, and perils;
- professional competence, including safe and effective pastoral counselling and care skills;
- good standing within one's endorsing body, religious competence and religious status, advantageous also for effective community and key leader relationship;
- enduring respect that receives a person for who they are, discerns and respects their needs (including religious and non-religious needs and perspectives that may contradict one's own) and has the will to facilitate and serve those needs, and
- moral courage that has the confidence to speak truth to power and the intelligence to nuance that in a way that it is received effectively.

It is also true to say that there are things that over time wax and wane, at least in terms of their prevalence and emphasis. A chaplain on the Western Front, in the thick of mass burials and the call for likely end-of-life absolution, sacraments and other ministrations was likely doing very little in terms of relationship counselling and pastoral support in the wake of an unsavoury geographical posting. Nor was he (exclusively "he" in that day – fortunately no longer the case) likely to be facilitating religious support to Hindu, Buddhist or Islamic members of their battalion (although stories indicate religious diversity within our forces even then). Chaplains in the thick of things in Korea were unlikely attending to transition support for their people. Nor were chaplains through the "peacetime years" likely to be conducting daily funerals and end-of-life care for their soldiers and officers, or even key religious leader engagement in overseas environs and populations. Chaplains in a static barracks environment or focussed on "at-home", rear support to exercises and operations might go months without performing meaningful faith-specific support activity.

Yet, through all of this, chaplaincy and chaplains, at the macro and micro levels, remained fit for purpose amidst the fluctuating and evolving requirements (or emphases) of the day.

At the micro level, the chaplain as a single person capability brick (that current reality, in itself, remains an aspect to be explored in an evolving capability) has been selected, trained and is expected to be fit – physically, spiritually, professionally, intellectually, relationally – to meet (or at least facilitate) all specified capability requirements. And to have the spiritual and professional disciplines to maintain that fitness and nurture one's own wellbeing.

At the macro level, the RAAChD has responded to (even pre-empted) evolving organisational realities and capability signals to pivot training, employment specifications and professional requirements to meet the growing pastoral care focus and proportion of chaplaincy demand. Broadening of the ADF's religious demographic and the ambiguous tapering of religious requirement[1] has necessitated the introduction of chaplains of previously unrepresented faith groups and continual pursuit of the best ways to address the spiritual development of Army's people. Educational emphases and specialist officer training continually evolve in response to perceived shifts in capability requirement. Recruiting practices and filters are bolstered to provide assurance around suitability of candidates for person-centred and inclusive care in the pluralistic defence environment, and cultural work reinforces that. Furthermore, the growth of wellbeing supports within Army and the defence organisation have broadened through the decades to include specialist medical, psychological, social and other personnel support mechanisms. Chaplaincy has, rightly, worked hard to both team with these welfare mechanisms for interdisciplinary care, AND maintain its unique capability distinctive, which, like many disciplines, is not necessarily required by all but is available, and frequently availed, by many.

Clearly, that is not to say that both (individual chaplains and the "department") have been without blemish or deficiency along the way. No capability is. However, anecdotally (and contrary to some detracting commentary) commanders and soldiers have valued the contribution of those chaplains of all eras. Soldiers (even many soldiers without inherent religious needs) have sought the support of chaplains for care beyond the specific remit of faith, and chaplaincy has been able to leverage and complement other disciplines in the holistic support of these complex human beings. Human spirituality is enduring.

Being fit for purpose necessitates understanding the unique contribution that one's capability brings, thus avoiding playing in lanes that belong to other contributors. In this way one remains authentic, and evolves delivery of that capability in line with the receiving organisation's emerging shape and requirements. My observation (through both historical record and personal service experience) is that Army chaplaincy has managed to do this for over a century without compromising or diminishing its essential spiritual distinctive, vitality or its unique motivation for service. A service motivation ("calling") that soldiers (with their well calibrated "bulls**t detectors") intuitively discern as being trustworthy, authentic and genuine in its care for them (or not, when chaplains fail in this).

Of course, being fit for purpose sometimes necessitates a "contrary" posture. Contrary does not mean, nor is it served well by, a combative approach (contextual pun fully intended!). An educated and educating chaplaincy respectfully assists the organisation in understanding aspects of human nature, culture and transcendent realities that are not apparent in everyone's lived experience or learned bias. Spiritually vital chaplaincy, in fully value adding, will, amongst other things:

- help the organisation grapple with the reality of western individualism, its growing priority of the self and its perspective limited to the temporal, and how that impacts an individual's motivation (or otherwise) towards self-sacrifice, particularly that which we term "the ultimate sacrifice";

- critically evaluate the limits of a “stoic” approach to resilience and character in light of thousands of years of tradition and philosophical thought;
- bring empathy and understanding in unpacking the deeply spiritual and often religious raison détre of neighbouring cultures and communities, sometimes mysterious, even suspicious to some of our people whose non-religious life experience has not prepared them for meaningful engagement in those theatres; and
- assist the organisation navigate the bio-psycho-social-spiritual care of its members dealing in the margins of life and death, in the context of its own secular reality.

This aspect of the secular nature of the defence organisation is an enduring and important conversation in the context of this journal edition. And, of course, the term itself is variously understood. Historically, it applied to the inclusion of all spiritual and religious identities (the Constitutional definition and facilitator of true diversity). Only to witness the term breaking away from its original meaning to popularly denote the absence of religious affiliation or belief. A recent manifestation has actively sought the removal of all religious practice or support by public bodies. A useful expression or analogy, “seat at the table”, used by a contributor to this year’s journal, potentially provides a respectful starting point for engagement and service of our diverse communities both in Australia and abroad (notwithstanding the conjecture around whether “secularism” by popular definition indeed IS the table or one seat AT the table).

If chaplaincy stepped back from these conversations, it would not serve the Army well, nor would it be fit for purpose.

When it:

- embraces contributory dissent and unconventional counsel, confident in its unique and valuable spiritual contribution and capability;
- answers the call beyond self-preservation and embraces its distinctive “vocation”;
- has the moral courage to advocate for the disempowered and misunderstood; and
- brings the organisation and its people to a better place of care, of understanding and awareness beyond the immediate and the temporal,

it is truly fit for purpose.

I am delighted that the Australian Army Chaplaincy Journal prompts and encourages you, its reader, in those conversations. It is my great honour to have been invited to share this reflection with you and to commend the 2023 Edition of the Australian Army Chaplaincy Journal.

Endnote

1. There is nothing ambiguous about the demographic (affiliation) statistics indicating diminution, and, certainly, the profile and prominence of organised religious practice in contemporary Australian society has tapered. A question around this exists in my mind merely because of the likely disparity between religious identification and practice of early 20th century soldiers (they were likely less religiously active than affiliation data would suggest) AND the anecdotal (and personal) experience of contemporary soldiers being more spiritually (and sometimes religiously) aware than affiliation data would suggest. In reality, not much may have changed. Human spirituality is enduring.

Now More Than Ever: “Fit for Purpose”

Mark Layson, Lindsay B. Carey, Megan C. Best

Rev. Dr. Mark Layson, DipPolStud, BDiv(Hons), DipMin, MA(Theol), Grad.DipPsych, PhD., is Operations Manager with the NSW Disaster Recovery Network and Adjunct Research Fellow at Charles Sturt University. His research developed a biopsychosocial-spiritual framework to prevent betrayal type moral injury in Australian first responders and was conducted under auspices of the School of Theology and School of Psychology.

Associate Professor Chaplain (WGCDR) Lindsay B. Carey, BA, BEdSc, BTheol., Grad.DipEd (SocSci), MAppSc., PhD., is Research Director for the Directorate of Spiritual Health and Wellbeing, ADF Mental Health and Wellbeing Group, Canberra, Australia. He has served as reservist chaplain for over 20 years as well as a lecturer and researcher at La Trobe University for over 30 years specializing in bioethics, palliative and pastoral care.

Assoc. Prof. Megan C. Best: BMed(Hons), GradDipQHR, MA, PhD., is a researcher at the Institute for Ethics and Society at the University of Notre Dame, Sydney, Australia. She also holds the position of Senior Lecturer at the University of Sydney. She has published extensively in the areas of spirituality in healthcare, whole person care and psycho-oncology. Throughout her career she has engaged with evidence-based health policy development.

Introduction

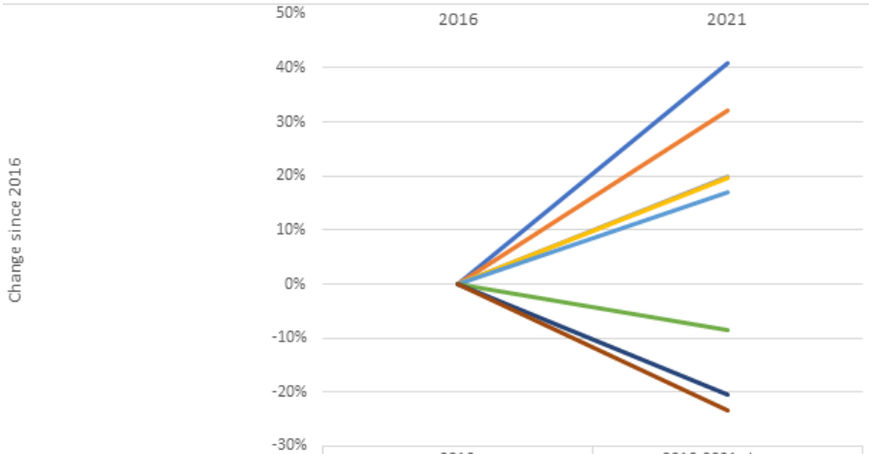
“Change is the only constant in life” Heraclitus (6-5th century B.C.)

“The more things change, the more they stay the same” Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr (1808-1890)

It is increasingly reported that organised religion is fading in Western countries, and Australia is no exception to this. The Australian Bureau of Statistics reports that “no religion” has increased from 19% in 2006 to 30% in 2016 and 38.9% in 2021.[1] With there being no apparent ceiling for where this “no religion” figure might end, it could be suggested that those who minister from a faith-based or religious background are not needed, as they are not the right fit for our secular culture generally, nor (as some would argue) for our military specifically. The argument goes that the military should start to draw down its faith-based chaplaincy capacity, aiming to see them completely removed by the end of the decade.[2] This line of argument for removing faith-based chaplains, or diluting their role, has strong intuitive appeal. However, it is based on three erroneous assumptions: first, that ‘no religion’ is equivalent to ‘secular’; second, that only religious personnel seek or gain benefit from religious chaplaincy, and third, it fails to take into account the projected increase in diverse religious beliefs held by many culturally and linguistically diverse people.

While much is made of the so-called secularisation of Australia, secularism as a belief is held by only a small and reducing number of people. Figure 1 indicates that Australians calling themselves secular, rationalist, or humanist declined by over 20% between 2016 and 2021, while those aligned with Christianity, for example, reduced by only 8%. And while the number of those reporting ‘no religion’ has increased over 40% from 2016 to 2021, affiliation with religions other than Christianity has also increased markedly, by over 30%. The trend towards non-belief, it would seem, is more about disaffiliation and diversification than opposition to religious belief per se.

Figure 1: Change in Spiritual and Religious Affiliation 2016-2021



	2016	2016-2021 change
No religion	0	40.87%
Other religions	0	32.16%
Agnosticism*	0	20.05%
Total spiritual beliefs	0	19.77%
Atheism	0	17.03%
Christian	0	-8.63%
Total progressive beliefs	0	-20.44%
Total secular/rationalist/humanist	0	-23.33%

*Note: * "Agnosticism" line is graphically obscured by "Total spiritual beliefs" line. Sources [1, 69]. Total Spiritual beliefs includes "own spiritual beliefs", "other spiritual beliefs", "other spiritual beliefs not further described" (nfd). Total Progressive beliefs includes "New-age", "Multi-faith", "Unitarian Universalism" and "Theism". Total secular/rationalist/humanist includes "Humanism", "Secular beliefs not classified", "Secular beliefs (nfd)", "Rationalism", "Secular beliefs and other spiritual beliefs and no religious affiliation (nfd)".*

The discussion below will present evidence from the latest research to assess the ongoing value and fitness of faith-based chaplaincy. This article takes the perspective that, in the changing Australian religious context, faith-based chaplaincy not only remains fit for purpose but is becoming increasingly important to address the holistic wellbeing of all Defence personnel. Chaplaincy of course should always reconsider its form and content with respect to changing demographics — indeed, this is essential — and as a result of considerable chaplaincy research, such reconsiderations have been ongoing for decades.[3] Chaplaincy should be maintained in the ADF as a relevant and well-trusted service that contributes to the wellbeing of personnel and the efficient running of the armed services.

Purpose of chaplaincy

In determining the value of chaplaincy, it is important to understand what the purpose of chaplaincy *'is'* and *'is* not', as well as its role within the ADF. Chaplains currently play a part in various multi-disciplinary wellbeing teams in which they provide holistic care across a wide variety of activities.[4, 5] It is a mistake to assert that a competent chaplain only does "religious" or "spiritual stuff" such as chapel services and prayers. The faith traditions of most chaplains abhor those who are religiously devoted practitioners but who care only for the soul and fail to care for the body as well. Instead, chaplains seek to model themselves as "Good Samaritans" whose faith-motivated actions attend to the physical wellbeing of all those who suffer — even across lines of cultural animosity.

Since the classic works of Clebsch and Jaekle (1964) and Clinebell (1984), pastoral care has been synonymous with 'healing', 'sustaining', 'guiding', 'reconciling' and 'nurturing'.[6, 7] The pastoral care which chaplains provide therefore, is very much based upon a bio-psycho-social-spiritual model of the human—and not just the religious or spiritual—because all are essential for holistic health and wellbeing. It is no mistake, then, that the first celebrated act of a chaplain is the action of St Martin of Tour (316-397AD), was not a prayer or other ritual, but sharing his cloak with someone in need.[8]

Chaplains have always habitually provided "*bio*logical" care by seeking to meet the physical needs of those in distress – which is very much in accordance with the meaning of the word 'pastoral' and 'pastoral care' (deriving from the Latin meaning shepherding; that is protecting, caring for and/or curing something or someone in need). Today, chaplaincy pastoral care may involve physical care by organising the provision of food, or even cooking it, or finding accommodation through their own networks, or maybe dry clothes. Importantly, the combination of physical care with spiritual care is a multiplier of efficiency in caring for personnel.

Chaplains are also able to provide a level of psychological care for staff, that may include mental health first aid or *Psychological* First Aid (PFA), as well as referrals to mental health professionals. Often on call 24/7, chaplains may be the one support service that is willing to be called out to assist personnel at risk of suicide at 3am. Their provision of triage for psychological needs at crucial times is a vital bridge between staff members and mental health professionals. This "chaplaincy bridge" is needed because some military personnel may be unwilling to engage with mental health professionals due to the stigma or fear of mandatory disclosure by mental health professionals.[9, 10]

The bridge between pastoral care and mental health professionals is often created through the social connectivity that chaplains have with personnel.[11, 12] The pastoral model of ministry, that is almost unique to faith-based ministry, is that of living in close community and caring for those with whom they serve. Chaplains prefer not to be subject matter experts who remain relationally distant and "objective", instead they become a fellow traveller. The Apostle Paul wrote that he loved those to whom he ministered so much that he shared with them his entire life (1 Thessalonians 2:8). Many mental health professionals are hindered from having such relationships due to the need to maintain an objective clinical distance from those to whom they provide therapy. While chaplains may not necessarily be peers, they serve alongside and experience many of the same conditions as other personnel, which enables them to be expert companions through the proactive provision of social support.

It is important to stress that the services of mental health professionals provided to military staff are absolutely essential, however, not all levels of distress require clinical intervention. Indeed, there is the possibility that we can over-pathologize distress and jump to medical solutions too quickly to the detriment of the person unnecessarily diagnosed with a clinical problem.[13-16] It is in the holistic, sub-clinical and relational level that chaplains excel.[17-19] And while chaplains fulfil bio-psycho-social roles as part of their daily work, they are also the primary experts in the spiritual and religious care of staff.

Spirituality and/or religion

It is in spiritual and religious care that we not only find the element of the chaplain's pastoral role that animates their bio-psycho-social functions, but also a distinct kind of care in its own right. Spiritual and religious wellbeing is associated with improved mental and physical health outcomes.[20-23] However, in a culture with decreasing explicit understanding of religion, it is becoming increasingly common to split spirituality from religiosity to the point of these being mutually exclusive or even opposing positions. For example, the phenomenon of being "spiritual but not religious" pits the two positions against each other. This splitting apart may make it seem that faith-based chaplaincy is not necessary to provide spiritual care. This may be true to a limited extent; however, faith-based chaplains remain the most able and willing to undertake spiritual care irrespective of an individual's faith or no faith at all.

It is generally acknowledged that spirituality and religiosity are not the same thing, with spirituality now being defined as, "a dynamic and intrinsic aspect of humanity through which persons seek ultimate meaning, purpose, and transcendence, and experience relationship to self, family, others, community, society, nature, and the significant or sacred. Spirituality is expressed through beliefs, values, traditions, and practices".[24] This consensus definition is wide enough to capture almost everyone, indeed, universal application is intrinsic to this definition.

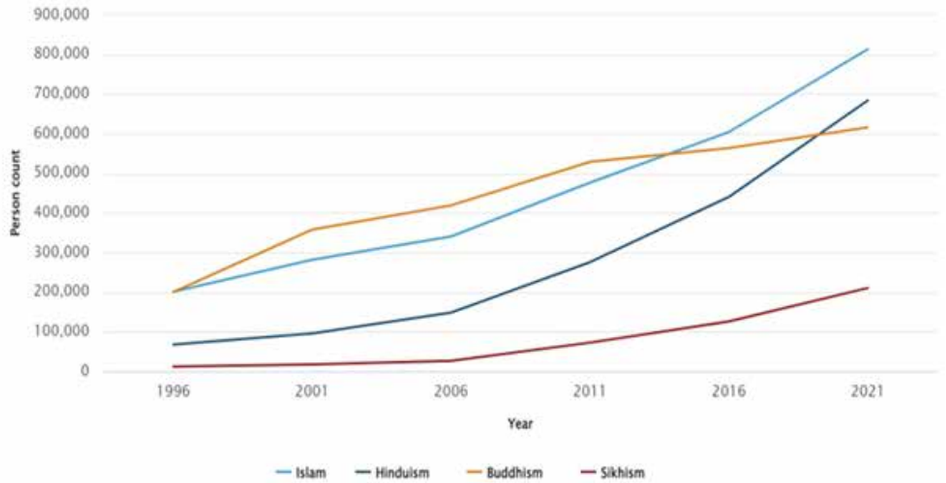
Religion, on the other hand, is said to maintain these same characteristics noted above, but with the addition of explicit creeds, codified ethics, communal expression, and most often a shared belief in a particularly deity or deities.[5] It is concluded, therefore, that almost all people are spiritual in some way, while some express their spirituality through religion. However, the interplay between religion and spirituality in research often neglects an historical, anthropological, or pragmatic reflection on the relationship between religion and spirituality with regard to holistic care. When such an examination does take place, we see that the two are not so easily split, and that the functions of faith-based chaplains are uniquely positioned to fulfil both.

The internationally renowned psychiatrist Harold Koenig is one who does consider the history between religion and spirituality, believing that historically almost everyone was religious, while only the most devout, such as priests, monks, and nuns, were considered spiritual.[25] That is now reversed, with almost everyone being spiritual, and only the most devout being religious. However, religiosity had a foundational and lasting impact on the development of spirituality that we see in today's secular societies. Christian Smith writes of this, "So deep did Christianity's wagon wheels wear into the ground of Western culture and consciousness, that nearly every secular wagon that has followed — no matter how determined to travel a different road — has found it nearly impossible not to ride in the same tracks of the faith of old".[26] Accordingly, the 'ghosts' of religion haunt the spirituality of many of those who would say "I'm not religious" in a way they may not fully understand themselves — but to whatever degree, are dependent in some way upon the faith of those who have preceded them.

Others describe this connection as some kind of religious residue that remains in the beliefs and behaviours of those who have since de-identified as religious.[27, 28] An advantage of faith-based chaplains is that they maintain an explicit knowledge of the foundational belief structures many personnel now hold subconsciously, even as it continues to shape their coping mechanisms. Unlike many other allied health workers, or those *not* having theological training, faith-based chaplains have the knowledge and tools to help unpack adaptive and maladaptive religious/spiritual coping strategies. For example, punitive religious appraisals, loss of faith, unforgiveness, or anger at God may drive low wellbeing.[29, 30] In a decreasingly religious landscape that favours an amorphous spirituality, faith-based chaplains may be the only practitioners who are anchored in both religious and spiritual principles that can often influence health outcomes. Therefore, chaplaincy skills will be more and more necessary in a secular culture that is cut off from its religious moorings and being dragged along by the currents of popular trends.

There is also an often-narrow Western anthropological window through which reflection on the relationship between religion and spirituality takes place. It has been noted that much psychological (including psychology of religion) research has been done among WEIRD populations (Western, Educated, Industrialised, Rich, Democratic).[31] When non-WEIRD populations are consulted, assumptions about many phenomena, including the interplay between religion and spirituality, vary widely.[32] So while WEIRD nations experience declining religiosity, religion remains the key driver of non-WEIRD spirituality, with over 80% of the world's population holding a religious belief of some kind.[33] Removing religious knowledge and understanding from spirituality, has a hint of a new type of WEIRD colonialism on the spiritual landscape.[34] As Figure 2 shows, religions other than Christian (e.g., Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism), which are often expressed in culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, are increasing rapidly within Australian society and must be considered in the provision of spiritual care. Figure 2 displays the growth of "other religions" in Australia since 1996.

Figure 2: Affiliation with the main other religions, 1996 to 2021



Note: Source Australian Bureau of Statistics, Religious affiliation in Australia 04/07/2022

In Australia, the corollary of looking through a broader anthropological window, is that faith-based chaplains will remain important to many CALD military recruits for whom spirituality and religion are not mutually exclusive. Additionally, faith-based chaplaincy brings a capability advantage by facilitating key leader engagement (KLE) on deployments in countries with high religiosity because religious leaders are often held in high regard by political and military key leaders. As previously noted, "a diverse range of religions will allow an intimate appreciation of religion that can contribute to Army's effectiveness on both domestic and international operations. Furthermore, it will improve Army's national and international reputation as a diverse and inclusive organisation".[35] It is faith-based chaplains who are uniquely fit for this purpose, so as to increase this effectiveness and inclusivity.

Finally, there is a pragmatic element in the provision of spiritual and religious care that is often ignored. While spiritual and religious care provision has been encouraged among medical and allied health professionals,[36] it has been reported that health care professionals will attend to spiritual issues as little as 1% of the time.[5] Indeed, a systematic review found that religious/spiritual conversations with physicians were infrequent and inadequate with an average one third of physicians discussing it, with this figure increasing with the religiosity of the physician and the nearness of death for the patient.[37] While half of psychiatrists were reported to engage in spiritual conversations, some psychologists report that they were specifically trained not to venture into spirituality.[38] Even many of those health professionals who do provide supportive care to cancer patients in secular organisations, simply do not provide the spiritual care which the carers themselves conceptually believe to be important.[39] Faith-based chaplains, however, engage with spiritual and religious issues as their core role, and may be the only practitioners who can be relied upon to consistently address spirituality, sometimes known as the fourth dimension of healthcare.[40] Spiritual care is also increasingly important to ensure best practice care for those whom current research increasingly describes as suffering a "moral injury" that manifests as "dents in the soul".[41]

Moral Injury and Moral Distress

Since 2009, a body of research has been growing exponentially regarding the phenomenon of moral injury.[42] Moral injury was first described by psychiatrist, Jonathan Shay, in light of his work with Vietnam Veterans.[43] Since then, the Australian Defence Force (ADF) has adopted the definition of moral injury as:

> …a trauma-related syndrome caused by the physical, psychological, social and spiritual impact of grievous moral transgressions, or violations, of an individual's deeply held moral beliefs and/or ethical standards due to: (i) an individual perpetrating, failing to prevent, bearing witness to, or learning about inhumane acts which result in the pain, suffering or death of others, and which fundamentally challenges the moral integrity of an individual, organization or community, and/or (ii) the subsequent experience and feelings of utter betrayal of what is right caused by trusted individuals who hold legitimate authority.[44]

Moral injury has been put forward as a better model for understanding the distress of military personnel than post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), because moral injury takes a holistic view of those who suffer. That is, moral injury considers the spiritual weight of morally fraught situations that personnel may face, which many practitioners have previously overlooked. Much literature is available that helps explain moral injury and its link to suicidal behaviour.[45] Australian research in particular has noted the evidence of moral injury among Australian veterans.[46, 47] It is worth noting with regard to moral injury, that the faith-based nature of chaplaincy is increasingly being seen as essential to achieve meaningful collaborative therapeutic regimes.[48-54] Furthermore, previous U.S. research reported that 84.9% of a military sample believed chaplains were the best qualified to treat spiritual/moral injuries.[55] Faith-based chaplains are fit for the purpose of providing the combination of filial care, and the timely application of forgiveness, ritual, and restoration that complement mental health therapies. As moral injury research progresses it becomes increasingly clear that faith-based chaplaincy is more than fit for purpose, it is actually tailor-made to address moral injury's core issues.[56]

Chaplains: Well Trained and Well Used

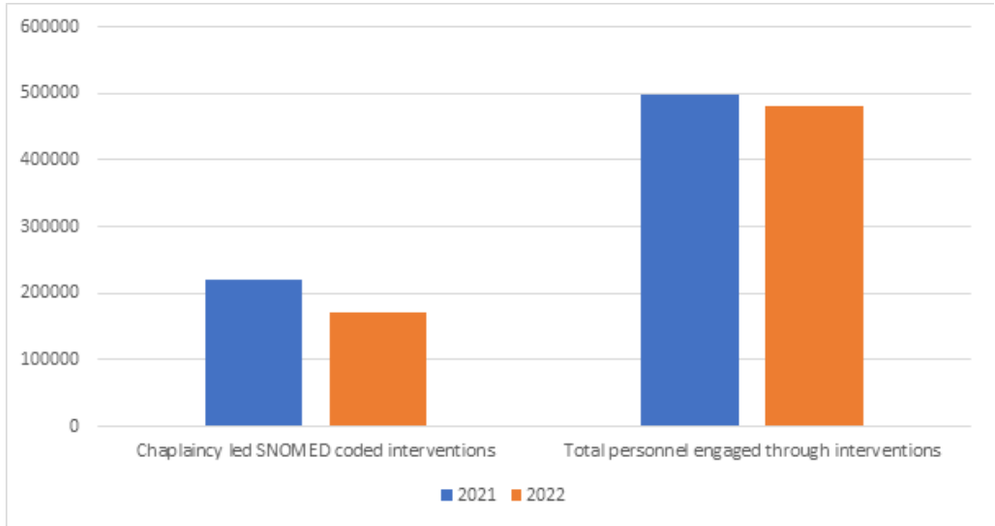
Chaplains bring multiple layers of training to their role which ensure they are individually fit for purpose (See figure 4). **First**, many chaplains, prior to recruitment as chaplains, have had a secular education and a former career that widens their skill-set. For example, chaplains may have been teachers, engineers, medically trained, or even previously served as a sailor, soldier or aviator. Adding to this, military chaplains have at least two years of ministry experience after their pastoral training. The background in secular work and extensive pastoral training and experience gives chaplains a real-world grounding and the ability to relate to a wide range of personnel.

Second, chaplain's theological and pastoral qualifications are gained through research into more than just ancient languages and doctrine. All theological degrees also include considerable training in the provision of spiritual and pastoral care to distressed people, along with philosophical and ethical/moral education. While these spiritual and pastoral subjects are staple to theological degrees, these are almost completely absent from medical and allied health degrees such as psychology and social work, thus making faith-based chaplains the unique subject matter experts in the field of spiritual, religious, and pastoral care.

Third, as well as specific training in cultural competence in the military, chaplains have access to a raft of courses such as clinical pastoral education (CPE), Psychological First Aid (PFA), Mental Health First Aid (MHFA), Suicide Prevention Programs, and Moral Injury Skills Training (MIST), accompanied with training in Pastoral Narrative Disclosure (PND) (Hodgson & Carey, 2022). Such training and education assist in ensuring that chaplains are fit and ready for the task of providing spiritual/religious care to military personnel how - and when they need it. What is more, chaplains multiply their impact when spiritual care is combined with their bio-psycho-social tasks, particularly with regards to the social trust they build with personnel, as recent research has demonstrated the importance of a trust for therapeutic success.[57, 58] Hence the importance of collaboration with the faith-based relational ministry of chaplains, combined with mental health professionals, and other health professionals, to ultimately offer the best care for personnel.[42, 50, 59]

Trust is key to chaplaincy work, and even those opposed to faith-based chaplaincy will admit that chaplains are highly trusted.[60] Military personnel trust the care and expertise of chaplains, utilising their services at very high rates. This trust is evident in the Australian context by the fact that, chaplains provided approximately 220,000 and 171,000 specific interventions in 2021 and 2022 respectively (Figure 3). These interventions were coded according to the systematized nomenclature of medical and clinical terms (SNOMED-CT) and were received by 500,000 and 480,000 ADF personnel in those years respectively. This high level of use is indicative of the current fitness of the chaplaincy model.

Figure 3: ADF Chaplaincy Coding and Reporting - Navy, Army and Air Force (2021-2022)



Note: Source. ADF Directorate of Spiritual Health and Wellbeing (2022).
Data reports all defence enterprise personnel engaged through chaplaincy interventions.

Additionally, recent Australian research of a random sample of military personnel (n = 2783) reported that, of those who were offered a question about their religious affiliation, 28.4% (n = 317) identified with a specific religion, yet nearly four times that number (n=1230) of military personnel had utilised chaplaincy services. Furthermore, over 85% of those who utilised chaplains were satisfied or very satisfied with the support they received, while 10% were 'undecided', and only 5% 'unsatisfied' (ADF Survey, 2021). It appears that in a low religious cohort of ADF military personnel, nevertheless faith-based chaplaincy is perceived as being fit for purpose.

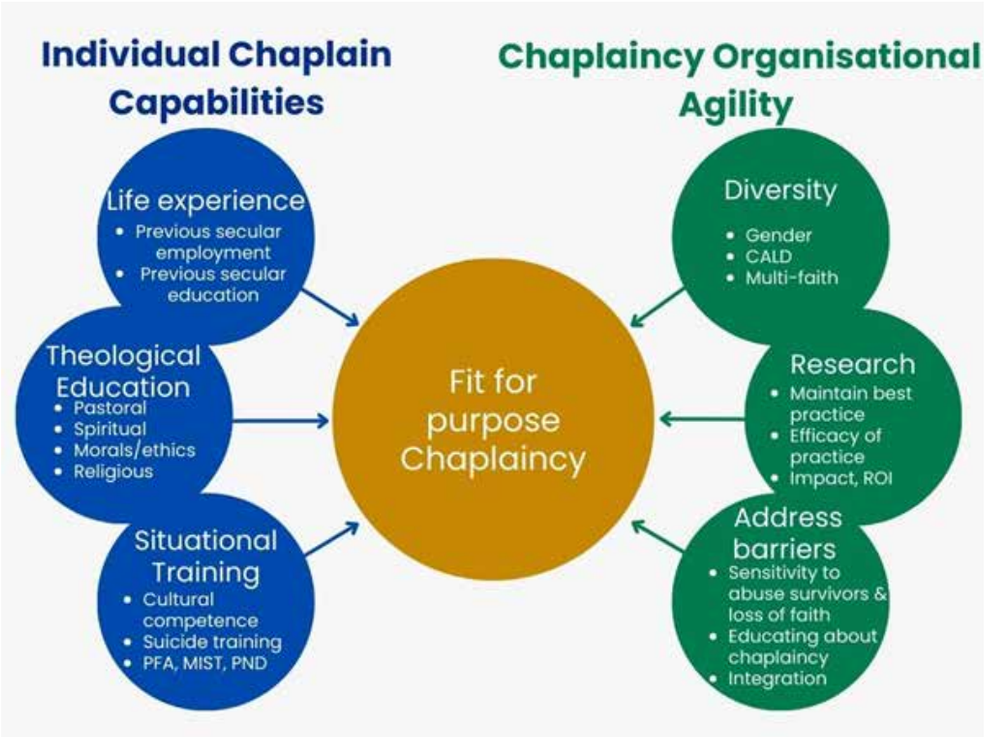
The above discussion shows that, despite false assertions that faith-based chaplaincy is past its use-by date, there remains an obvious spiritual and religious need, and a high willingness by military personnel to use faith-based chaplains, and despite a large number of those being non-religious.

This suggests that arguments against faith-based chaplaincy are ideological rather than factual. For while there is currently a large-scale downward trend in religiosity in our community, there is still an ongoing utilization of the services of faith-based chaplains. It appears that the more things change, the more they stay the same. In a changing cultural context, the need and usage of chaplaincy remains stable and potentially more demanding.

Staying fit for purpose: Responding to change.

It is important to acknowledge of course that chaplaincy organisations and programs must be ready to continue to evolve in a way that does not diminish the capability advantage that faith-based chaplaincy currently offers. Addressing the following issues will increase the current chaplain's utility (See Figure 4). Firstly, in a changing Australian culture, chaplaincy must evolve to embrace a greater religious, gender, and cultural diversity. It is interesting to note that 40% of recent migrants to Australia profess that they belong to religions other than Christianity, suggesting that these groups may make a greater component of future recruitment, thereby increasing religiosity within the ranks of the ADF.[61] Within the ADF the Religious Advisory Committee to the Services (RACS), which has a multi-faith membership, is well placed to encourage those from non-Christian faith groups to consider chaplaincy. Additionally, with increasing percentages of females in the ADF, it will be important to continue to ensure a larger intake of female chaplains to the services.

Figure 4: Two sources to maintain and build fit for purpose chaplains



Note: Abbreviations: Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD), Moral Injury Skills Training (MIST), Pastoral Narrative Disclosure (PND), Psychological First Aid (PFA), Return on Investment (ROI).

Secondly, it is also important for chaplains to be invested in ongoing research. Chaplaincy cannot simply rely on a long history of trusted service, it must have metrics that show its efficacy, return on investment, and continual improvement to best-practice service provision. It has been noted that chaplains will need to upskill as, "research skills will at some point become non-optional if chaplaincy is to continue to grow and flourish as a profession and receive the recognition and respect that it deserves".[62]

The final point to consider is the possible barriers for military personnel accessing care from faith-based chaplains. The largest review of the utilization of chaplaincy reports that this is actually an over-rated negligible problem,[63] despite much being made of it in some quarters. Nonetheless, chaplains must listen to these concerns, and understand the nuances. For example, church-based abuse may represent a barrier for abuse survivors that must be attended to with sensitivity and humility. Furthermore, addressing other barriers arising from ignorance about the role of chaplains,[64] poor integration of chaplaincy with other services,[65, 66] feelings of abandonment by God,[67] or previous bad experience of particular chaplains,[68] should remain a priority.

To address these barriers, chaplains will have to formulate new ways of explaining their role to less religiously knowledgeable commanders and those who may potentially use chaplaincy services. To complement this, military commanders must also be wary of accepting anti-religious prejudice which may be leveraged to stoke discontent with faith-based chaplaincy in spite of its considerable utilization and high satisfaction ratings. Most importantly, in the wake of abuse, chaplains will need to be sensitive to survivors and those with raised suspicions.

Far from nearing the end of their relevance, faith-based chaplains have provided and continue to provide a vital aspect of best practice holistic care for personnel. The knowledge and skills of faith-based chaplains are increasingly required in a culture that has little explicit understanding of the foundations of its belief structures. Importantly, as our understanding of moral injury and the need for spiritual care increases, now more than ever, faith-based chaplaincy is fit for purpose and capable of delivering the support that defence people need. Chaplaincy has always, and is constantly, looking forward to further developing this capability.

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Lessons in Conventions: Protecting Symbols and International Humanitarian Law

Chaplain Charles Vesely

Chaplain Charles Vesely is a Minister of the Uniting Church in Australia, and a senior Army Chaplain. Chaplain Vesely's present role is the Director, Chaplaincy - Joint Training, at the Australian Defence College, in Canberra. Prior to entering the ministry, Chaplain Vesely read law, specialising in criminal law and torts. During more recent times Chaplain Vesely's chaplaincy role has led him to become interested in International Humanitarian Law.

Abstract

The Hague, Geneva and other conventions established distinctive emblems for recognition protections in areas of operation during armed conflicts. Military chaplains operate in such areas and need to be familiar of the distinctive emblems, their use, and the protection which they afford. This familiarity by military chaplains supports their work and adds to the chaplaincy capability delivered.

Introduction

The main motivation for writing this paper comes from numerous occasions observed by the author where chaplains, government officers, or military personnel have not understood the various markings and symbols used to designate key protected persons, items, and installations under the Hague and Geneva Conventions and protocols.[1] This paper will seek to set out some of those keys symbols, how and why they may be used, and the protections which they offer to persons, items, and installations. Military Chaplains in particular, need to be familiar with the symbology and protections offered under the Geneva Conventions as the military chaplain who is a protected non-combatant, may find themselves as a key advisor to a variety of persons ranging from military, government officers and representatives of Non-Government Organisations (NGOs).

Protection for Certain Persons and Activities

Figure 1: Recognised Distinctive Emblems

Most people will recognise the Red Cross and Red Crescent emblems. Many people's recognition will come from popular culture such as movies, news images, and the like. Less familiar may be the akin emblems of the Red Lion and Sun,[2] Magen David Adom,[3] Red Crystal/Diamond.[4] This group of approved[5] emblems, in the context of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) are referred to as the 'Distinctive Emblems' declare the protected status of persons, buildings, vehicles and certain installations. Put simply, the emblems mean *"do not shoot"* at the person, vehicle, or building, these are not in the fight but here for humanitarian efforts. The philosophy of protected status of persons, vehicles or buildings displaying the emblems stem from the embryonic moves by Henry Dunant (1828-1910) after witnessing the inhumane results post the *Battle of Solferino* (24 June 1859) to set standards of humanitarian decency when lamentably, parties enter warlike situations.[6]

A very common misconception is that the Red Cross is simply an emblem of medical assistance. It is this author's opinion that this misconception is perpetuated due to three reasons. The first, is that medical and kindred personnel, who are protected persons under The Hague and Geneva Conventions along with hospitals, ambulances, aircraft, and ships outnumber the other personnel and items which enjoy the justly protected status. Thus, the common association with medical services/support. The second reason stems from the unauthorised or misuse of the Red Cross emblem. There are numerous examples of this misuse which are regrettably seldom enforced by the various authorities world-wide.[7] The misuse of the Red Cross emblem may be on toys (play medical kits), repair companies, medical centres, pharmacies, use of the emblem as an advertising device, video games graphics showing "aid" (by way of a red cross), and other unauthorised or inappropriate uses all add to the issue of misunderstanding. A quick search of the internet will quickly confirm many examples of misuse of the emblem.[8] This second reason particularly embeds the image in many people's minds as representing medical aid or services. The third reason, that impact chaplains, as other key stakeholders of bearers of the emblem, is that many personnel do not know that chaplains are protected persons under the Geneva Conventions. This misunderstanding in the view of the author is the opposite of the medical personnel. As Chaplains generally do not have as large footprint in situations where the wearing of the emblem is appropriate and required, it may lead to the mistaken assumption that one who wears the officially recognised emblem of the Red Cross/Crescent/et al must be a medical person due to the visual message manifest by the majority of wearers.

Another key point for one to keep in mind is that the Red Cross/Crescent/et al, emblems are for the exclusive use of situations where the Hague/Geneva Conventions apply. Hence civilian ambulance services, first aid posts in civilian settings, and first aid kits should not display those emblems. Many nations have adopted series standard emblems for such situations which do not resemble those covered by Hague/Geneva Conventions.[9]

Civilian or military authorities in situations where Hague/Geneva Conventions are applicable are obliged by virtue of Additional Protocol (AP), Article 83(2) to be fully acquainted with the text of the conventions and the protections which they offer. This area is an opportunity for chaplains to be one of the leading agencies of expertise in the giving of advice and monitoring operations to safeguard compliance on use of the Distinctive Emblem.

It needs to be noted that the convention is clear that 'Protected Persons' in a battle area shall wear the Convention approved headgear and/or clothing displaying the approved 'Distinctive Emblem.'[10] It needs to be noted that there are set sizing and colours which are approved to be displayed as the 'Distinctive Emblem.'

Protection of Items of Historical and Cultural Significance

Those familiar with modern history will be aware of the gross wholesale looting and destruction of objects and buildings during recent times. Irreplaceable items which shaped the cultures and histories of many nations were lost, stolen, damaged, and destroyed by wanton acts in the lead up to, during and immediately post armed conflicts. It was in 1954 that the Cultural Property Convention (CPC) was concluded in The Hague under the auspices of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) offering protection to key cultural properties. For the purposes of the Convention cultural property is defined as follows:

> *Movable or immovable property of great importance to the cultural heritage of every people,*[11] *such as monuments of architecture, art or history, whether religious or secular; archaeological sites; groups of buildings which, as a whole, are of historical or artistic interest; works of art; manuscripts, books and other objects of artistic, historical*

or archaeological interest; as well as scientific collections and important collections of books or archives or of reproductions of the property defined above.[12]

The CPC 1954/1999 works in a threefold manner to protect the above defined items. States must avoid the use of such items for military purposes,[13] hostilities must not be directed toward such property,[14] and the items must be protected from theft, misappropriation, vandalism, requisitioning, or reprisals.[15] The CPC 1954/1999 also behoves occupying forces to protect, safeguard, preserve such property.[16] Such sites may have the 'Blue Shield' displayed on building or areas. Similarly, the 'Blue Shield' symbol may appear on maps to denote the protection of property.

Figure 2: "The Blue Shield" Approved protected property symbol in accordance with CPC 1954.[17]

Military chaplains in the view of this author, should have good familiarity with the concepts of the "sacred and profane". Further, the pastoral work of chaplains should give chaplains good insight into the importance of certain property to communities, and the forming influences that such property may have on the wider humanity. The eighteenth-century Swiss Jurist, Emer de Vattel,[18] wrote, "for whatever cause a country is ravaged, we ought to spare those edifices which do honour to human society, and do not contribute to the enemy's strength… such as temples, tombs, public buildings, and all works of beauty. What advantage is obtained by destroying them?"[19]

Chaplains may be the key personnel who are able to give interpretation and meaning to such property and advise their commanders accordingly thus preserving such property to vouchsafe culture and meaning for present and future generations.

Works and Installations Containing Dangerous Forces

As this paper is being written, the reader will be cognisant that 2023 is the eightieth anniversary of the so called 'Dam Busters' raid during World War II. The Dam Busters raid was officially known as 'Operation Chastise.' Operationally, the raid was executed with incredible courage, flying skill, engineering and sacrifice. The raid achieved a significant negative impact on the Nazi war effort. Conversely, the raid also killed some 1600 non-combatants, amongst who were Allied prisoners of war. It needs to be understood that in 1943, there were no restrictions in any conventions restricting from such raid taking place and unleashing the enormous amounts of flooding waters in to the Ruhr Valley. It would be later that the conventions[20] would raise such issues and restrict the release of such dangerous forces. The conventions restricting the release of dangerous forces were established by the international community in order to protect non-combatants into whose environment such forces would be released with catastrophic aftermaths. In the case of "Operation Chastise" the dangerous force was stored water from a number of dams in the Ruhr Valley.

In more recent times, during the early days of the 2022 and ongoing war by Russian on Ukraine, there was fear held by many that the Russian Forces may attack the already damaged, but secured Chernobyl nuclear reactor. A grave and legitimate fear was and still is, that such an attack would release radioactive pollutants into the environment causing similar cataclysmic harm to the one caused by the disaster at the reactor in 1986. The protocol does require that the forces released must result in the "severe losses among the civilian population".[21] Should such an attack take place upon any nuclear electricity generating plant it may be considered in breach of this protocol. Dams, dykes, and nuclear electricity generating stations are the works and installations that are particularly covered by this protocol.

The convention provided a universally recognised symbol to be displayed on works, installations, and maps which may contain dangerous forces if released.[22] The international symbol of protection for these installations is 'a group of three bright orange circles of equal size placed upon the same axis the distance between being equal on radius.[23]

Figure 3: Recognised Protected works/installations containing Dangerous Forces Emblems[24]

In a similar way to the CPC 1954/1999, military chaplains should be aware of this protection, the symbology, and definitions surrounding the same.

Civil Defence

Figure 4: Convention Recognised Distinctive Emblem for Civil Defence[25]

In more modern times other symbols have been added to assist in IHL. One such symbol is that of the Civil Defence. Civil Defence consist of organisations whose objective is solely focused upon the civilian population. This protective role is concerned with the recovery from the ruination or damage of civilian structures and facilities. Civil defence personnel and related objects enjoy protections in the performance of their civil defence roles.[26] The typical humanitarian civil defence tasks include but not limited to, warning, evacuation, management of shelters, management of blackout measures, rescue, fire-fighting, detection and marking out of danger areas, decontamination, provision of emergency accommodation and supplies, maintenance of order in distressed areas, emergency repair of essential utilities, medical services including first aid, religious support, and mortuary affairs.[27] An example of religious support in the civil defence context could be the *Disaster Recovery Chaplains Networks*[28] (DRCN) which are being established in several Australian states through the ecumenical efforts of churches and other faith groups.

The military chaplain should note and be familiar with the operations of the civil defence group in their Area of Operations (AO) and seek to establish a spirit of cooperation between their various roles. Recognition and education of personnel as to the use of this symbol may be an important role that chaplains may fulfil for all stakeholders concerned.

Conclusion

As stated at the commencement of this paper, the observations are that IHL identifying symbology is not well known or understood by many persons who work or be called to work under situations where the Geneva, Hague, Conventions, and AP apply. Military chaplains have a need to be conversant with the approved symbology, and the various protocols governing the same. This paper is meant to be but an appetiser on the subject. The encouragement to be conveyed is for the military chaplain to undertake further reading and study of not just the symbology, but the deeper business of IHL. The study of IHL will give the well-versed practitioner of the art of military chaplaincy to feel a good degree of confidence in their art, and be able to value add to their delivery of the chaplaincy capability in their particular role, operation, or context.

Endnotes

1. 'The Hague law was largely concerned with how military operations are conducted; Geneva law was concerned with the protection of the victims of armed conflict.' United Kingdom Ministry of Defence, *The Manual of Armed Conflict* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 3, para 1.9.
2. Exclusively used by Iran from 1924 to 1980, however was replaced by the Red Crescent today.
3. Depicting a red Star of David on a white background. Alternatively, the former with a broad red diamond surrounding. Exclusively used by Israel, the former is within the State of Israel and the latter when operating abroad.
4. The Red Chrystal is known as the *'Third Protocol Emblem',* December 2005 Recognised by the ICRC for use on 22 June 2006. The Red Crystal may be seen to be used in Israel and Palestine regions.
5. https://www.redcross.org.au/about/the-red-cross-emblem
6. See J H Dunant, *A Memory of Solferino* (English Version) (Washington DC US: American Red Cross, 1939, 1959)
7. In the Australian Context, the authority for use of the Distinctive Emblem rests with the Minister of Defence in collaboration with the Australian Red Cross (ARC). In more recent times the ARC and ministry of Defence have issued notices to number of organisations advising of the unauthorised use of the Distinctive Emblem
8. Guidance from the Australian Red Cross on use of the Red Cross emblem: https://www.redcross.org.au/about/the-red-cross-emblem/guide-to-emblem-use/#:~:text=Common%20misuses&text=They%20are%20often%20seen%2C%20again,the%20emblem%2C%20please%20email%20us
9. Ibid.
10. AP I, Art 5
11. 'This means items of international rather than local importance.' See UK MOD, *Manual of the Law of Armed Conflict*, par. 5.26.2
12. CPC, Art 1(a)
13. UK MOD *Manual of the Law of Armed Conflict*, states: 'Cultural property or its surrounds must not be used in such a way as to expose it to destruction or damage in the event of armed conflict.' Par. 5.26.3
14. Ibid, 5.26.3, 5.26.8, CPC Art 4(2)
15. CPC, Art 4
16. CPC, Art 5
17. https://theblueshield.org/download/the-1954-hague-convention-blue-shield-emblems-of-protection
18. 1714-1767
19. Gary D. Solis, *The Law of Armed Conflict International Humanitarian Law*, 2nd edition (NY, USA: Cambridge University Press, 2016); 711, citing S A Williams, *The International and National Protection of Movable Property: A Comparative Study* (NY: Dobbs Ferry, 1978), 5-6
20. Additional Protocol I (AP I), Art 56(1)
21. See ICRC Commentary para 2154, 'Severe' is interpreted 'as a matter of common sense and in good faith on the basis of the objective elements such as the proximity of inhabited areas and the lie of the land.'
22. Article 17, Article 56 (7)

23. https://ihl-databases.icrc.org/en/ihl-treaties/api-amended-annex-i-1993/article-17?activeTab=1949GCs-APs-and-commentaries

24. API, Art 56(7)

25. AP I, Art 66(4)

26. AP I, Art 52(1)

27. See UK MOD, Manual of the Law of Armed Conflict, paragraph 5.43.1

28. See https://www.ncca.org.au/departments/aveca

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Twenty-First Century Chaplains and their Role in the Australian Defence Force: Leaders, Innovative and Tough

MAJGEN Chris Field DSC, AM, CSC

MAJGEN Chris Field DSC, AM, CSC, following his time as a Battalion Commanding Officer was asked by the then Senior Chaplain of 1st Australian Division (1 Div) Glynn Murphy, to think about, and discuss, his expectations of unit level [1] chaplains in the twenty-first century Australian Defence Force (ADF). In particular, Chaplain Murphy informed the author that he was seeking a commander's view on what makes chaplains helpful and what makes them unhelpful, with the view to inculcating ADF Chaplains with good habits early in their service. Despite more than a decade passing, the following sage advice offered by MAJGEN Field remains both current and relevant in these uncertain times.

As the author thought about the issues put to him by Chaplain Murphy, the author decided to concentrate on three universal expectations that he has formed about chaplains during 20 years of commissioned service, seven of which he was a commander, at various levels, in Australian Army infantry battalions. These three universal expectations are recommended for ADF Chaplains to ensure they are always: leaders; innovative; and tough.

In this Long War,[2] it is critical that ADF Chaplains are part of the overall warfighting capabilities of the ADF. Chaplains are not a luxury, and chaplains are not employed in the ADF for decoration. The ADF needs chaplains to contribute directly to tactical success in complex warfighting environments. The application of these three universal expectations will, in the author's view, enhance the ability of ADF Chaplains to support and empower ADF personnel in this physically, mentally, and morally demanding fight in which the ADF is engaged.

Leaders

Australia does not have a strong religious heritage. We do not have Australian equivalents of the American Pilgrims or Puritans.[3] Instead, the Australian character, both male and female, tends to overlook religion in favour of hardiness and self-reliance in a tough unforgiving physical environment.

An ADF Chaplain therefore, never gets a free ride. Experienced chaplains will know that making oneself relevant is a challenge in ADF units, especially units training for combat which tend to be dominated by 'blokey' and macho cultures. Chaplains will find that ADF units are not dominated by a single religion, but are fragmented into the major world religions, minor religions, and non-believers. All of these people need to be embraced, usually by a sole chaplain, in increasingly busy and operationally focussed ADF units.

A chaplain needs to be part of the leadership team of the unit. The chaplain needs to be connected to the Commanding Officer and their key staff, and connected to the other hierarchies within a unit. The chaplain wears an officer's rank, and on occasion may need to enforce that rank, but a chaplain is a chaplain first, and an officer second.

The chaplain's leadership needs to embrace all members of a unit, especially those members outside the formal unit hierarchy. In an Australian unit, almost everybody, except perhaps the most junior member of the unit, has a strong opinion about how to best run the organisation and in which direction the unit should take. These strong opinions are in fact the kernels of leadership that thrive in a unit environment, and these kernels form the basis of much of the ADF's warfighting success.

The chaplain should be positioned to nurture these kernels of leadership. The chaplain is another leader in the unit and, importantly, the chaplain, like other non-military sourced professionals such as the unit doctor, nurse, and resource manager, can see and harness leadership and the leadership qualities inherent in other people, through different eyes. The chaplain's eyes are influenced by years of religious study and experience. The chaplain understands the unique style of leadership required of religious ministries. And a good chaplain will impart that leadership, often in a seemingly secular manner, to help grow more leaders for a unit and for the ADF.

Innovative

A chaplain in an ADF unit has one person for whom the chaplain is directly responsible: themself. This is appropriate, and deliberate. This lack of direct responsibility gives a chaplain the freedom to be responsible, in a general sense, for every person in the unit, and often for people outside the unit.

Innovation will distinguish a chaplain not only from other chaplains but, importantly, from the other officers, and the hierarchy, of a unit. Innovation for a chaplain comes in many forms. Innovation may be based on a chaplain's unique religious skills such as links to local churches, festivals or counselling services, or on the chaplain leading the unit preparation or response to welfare issues, emergencies, stressful situations, or traumatic events. Innovation may be based on how the chaplain connects with people in a non-religious manner, through sport, through special interests, and through participating in the everyday working lives of people.

Innovation may also be the manner in which a chaplain leads the other support services available to units. Chaplains can help synchronise the effects of unit medical support, philanthropic services, physical training specialists, cultural leaders and trainers, and welfare personnel into a powerful single entity that has the primary goal of supporting people in a unit.

A good chaplain will directly assist a Commanding Officer by independently coordinating personnel issues in a unit. A good chaplain can be like a *7th Company Commander*,[4] meaning that a chaplain may be so trusted as to be considered as an additional commander, or an additional leader, in supporting the objectives of a Commanding Officer.

The author experienced one chaplain fulfilling, in a welfare matter, the de facto role of a company commander when a soldier was identified by the chaplain as having some significant psychological issues. The chaplain took the soldier into his care and, while keeping the chain of command aware of his actions, the chaplain was instrumental in having the soldier diagnosed, treated, counselled, supported, and finally transitioned to civilian life. By fulfilling these actions, the chaplain was able to relieve the actual company commander of a series of responsibilities related to the soldier's well-being, while the chaplain ensured that the best interests of the soldier were maintained.

Such innovation is time consuming and, arguably, outside the pure role of a chaplain. But, the twenty-first century ADF is too busy to have the luxury of a chaplain who cannot take the lead in a unit environment. No-one in the ADF can be a single shot system, or a stove-piped effect, or unable to be innovative, or incapable of synchronising with other unit, and non-unit, capabilities. A chaplain is no different. In the words of Brigadier Neil Weekes, AM, MC, who was a Platoon Commander at the Battle of Fire Support Base Coral in Vietnam in May 1968, all people in a unit, including chaplains must be prepared to 'lead, follow, or get out of the way.'

A chaplain, who wants to positively impact a unit, should actively seek innovative ways to add value to that unit. Do not wait for opportunities; seek to be involved in all aspects of unit life. Use the unique training and life experiences that chaplains receive to enhance the support for people in the unit. Look at the unit needs through the eyes of a person who is fundamentally a chaplain first and ADF officer second.

Tough

The ability for a chaplain to be tough may be a unique requirement of military chaplains. ADF personnel will need the support of a chaplain, and they will need to be encouraged and guided by caring and sensitive religious Ministers. ADF personnel also need chaplains who are able to put realism in their lives. As noted, a good chaplain will be part of the leadership of a unit, but will be clearly outside the formal hierarchy of that same unit. A good chaplain gives people, particularly people who feel vulnerable or disempowered, an option for support and counsel.

Equally important in a chaplains' repertoire is the ability to show a tough side to the people within a unit. It may be that a chaplain is best placed to tell people to 'wake up to themselves' and take responsibility for their own actions. This ability and skill is extremely important, particularly in the current societal climate that appears to shy aware from personal accountability. Sometimes a chaplain will be the only person in a leadership position in a unit who is trusted enough to hear a person's confidential thoughts and issues. The chaplain must use exceptional judgement to ensure that this position of trust and influence is utilised in a manner that is best for the person, the unit, and the ADF.

Sometimes a chaplain will need to give a person, 'hard love'. ADF service is not for everyone. The Long War requires a tough fight and, understandably, not all Australians are suited to the demands of fighting an elusive and innovative enemy. The operational tempo of the ADF is such that many people have now deployed on three or four occasions, or more, and, quite understandingly, families feel that they need attention above the requirements of the ADF. A chaplain must be able to identify the signs in people who have had enough. People who either need to leave the ADF, or who need a change in their professional lives within the ADF.

A chaplain who is mentally strong and morally confident is able to deliver tough advice; not only to people who need a change, but to unit leadership, including the Commanding Officer. A tough chaplain with moral fortitude and courage will save lives. No unit can ask for more from their chaplain.

A chaplain must also be physically and emotionally tough. Just like any leader, the chaplain will be fallible, have fears, and feel unsure or uncertain. Like any leader the chaplain must overcome these points of friction and, above all other duties, continue to lead within the unit and the wider ADF.

This type of perseverance requires a physically and mentally robust person. The best chaplains will possess and harness this toughness. A good chaplain can expect to have forthright discussions with all members of a unit, from the sailor, soldier, or aircrew who has a personal issue to the Commanding Officer who has a policy that is dangerous or simply just wrong.

Conclusion

The task of a unit chaplain is not for everybody, just as leading people is not for everybody. Chaplains of any religious background who apply the three universal expectations of being leaders, innovative, and tough will find that they enjoy their experience serving with a unit, and that they make a difference to the lives of people.

Making a difference is a key role for a good chaplain, and the twenty-first century ADF needs chaplains who are leaders first. Such leadership will continue to support ADF warfighting capabilities in this Long War.

Endnotes

1. A 'unit' in the ADF is defined as an organisation commanded by a Lieutenant Colonel (Equivalent), and may be designated as a ship; shore-establishment; battalion; regiment; air force squadron; or air force wing.

2. 'With its formal embrace of the term "long war," the Bush administration has turned a simple descriptive phrase into an official name for the war on terrorism, and possibly catapulted it into the ranks of such other era names as "Cold War" and "World War." The phrase has a long history. It has been applied to the 15-year war between the Habsburg monarchy and the Ottoman Empire that started in the 1590s. It also was a name proposed by University of Texas law professor Philip Bobbitt to cover a collection of 20th-century conflicts, from World War I to the Cold War, which resulted in democracy triumphing over communism and fascism.

   Its recent rise to rhetorical prominence in the U.S. military, according to several military officers, began in 2004 with Gen. John P. Abizaid, the Central Command chief who oversaw military operations in the Middle East. Abizaid invoked the phrase to underscore the long-term challenge posed by al Qaeda and other Islamic extremist groups.' Bradley Graham and Josh White, 'Abizaid Credited with Popularizing the Term "Long War"', *Washington Post* (03 Feb 2006), A08.

3. The Pilgrims, seeking religious freedom, set sail for North America in 1620 and established their colony in Plymouth. There they set up a democratic government in accordance with the terms of the famous "Mayflower Compact", an agreement binding all to conform to the will of the majority. In spite of great hardship, the Pilgrim settlement prospered…and in 1621 the first Thanksgiving was observed.

   The Puritans, who were also determined to find a place where their religious views and practices would be free from persecution [left England for Salem by ship] in 1628 led by John Endicott. The Official Website of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, http://www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cismaf/mf2.htm, accessed 04 Sep 07.

4. This analogy is somewhat parochial, indicating that an Australian Army Infantry Battalion has, currently, six Companies. Rather than Company Commander, titles such as Divisional Officer or Squadron Commander may be used by other ADF services, or other non-Infantry Army units.

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Deployment in the Pacific: Fit for Key Religious Leader Engagement

CHAP Kerrie Frizzell

Chaplain Kerrie Frizzell served as an Australian Christian Churches Ordained Pastor for over 15 years before joining the Australian Regular Army as a Chaplain. She spent many years serving in various aspects of community services which, she acknowledges, has given her a comprehensive foundation to minister within her role as a Support Chaplain. She is currently posted to Royal Military College, Duntroon, in Canberra, ACT.

Introduction

In August 2022 I deployed to the Solomon Islands on OP LILIA – Australia's commitment of Defence personnel who join with New Zealand and Fijian Defence personnel to form the Multinational Police Support Group on request of the Solomon Islands government in response to a period of riots in November 2021.

Of all the experiences I have had during my time as an Army Chaplain, this deployment was the most professionally rewarding.

As usual, prior to deploying the necessary pre-deployment training was undertaken. It became clear that particular considerations must be made with regard to the highly religious nature of the country and the significant influence this has in shaping the strength of relationships. The ability of a Chaplain deployed into that nation and engage with key religious leaders could not be understated.

Would a chaplain who was female be able to engage effectively when all the key religious leaders were men? My experience would suggest the answer is a resounding "Yes". I had a very successful deployment and was able to engage with the key religious leaders without challenge. In fact, opportunities were afforded to me that would otherwise have been missed.

No Longer Theory

This was my first international deployment. I had deployed domestically, but it was clear this was a different experience. Now was time to put all the years of training (including the years I had spent in civilian ministry and Chaplaincy) into practice – particularly in the area of international Key Religious Leader Engagement [K(Rel)L]. The prospect of what was ahead and the opportunities that could present themselves were exciting.

On arrival in the country, we visited the local leaders in pairs. This proved to be a positive experience as it gave opportunity for the members who accompanied me to see the importance of religious leader engagement in the Pacific and to interact and be involved with the Solomon Islanders in a meaningful way.

As time went on and schedules got busier, there were times I travelled to meetings alone. One significant religious leader, once he realised I was on my own, asked me to visit a women's shelter. This visit opened the door to an exceptional opportunity for the Task Group to be involved in a variety of avenues of support for that centre. One of these was the rebuilding of their kitchen. This project was completed by the next rotation through the country and was celebrated by many in key leadership roles within that denomination (one of the largest denominations in the Solomon Islands).

The main consideration when meeting with religious leaders was that they saw me as a religious leader as well. By introducing myself as an Assemblies of God Pastor (as my denomination is known in country) reinforced the legitimacy of my presence within the religious communities and opened up dialogue and relationships. The relationships and conversations have continued with some of these leaders upon my return to Australia, highlighting the genuineness of the connections.

Being a female Chaplain in the Solomon Islands opened up avenues of connection with the women of that country that was either restricted or prohibitive to the men who had gone before me.

The rotation I was part of had a number of other female members. When engaging with the women's groups and meeting women who were leaders in the community, it was advantageous to be able to take one or two of them with me. This increased the engagement opportunities and allowed for more conversations to occur to learn about the experience of women and children in the Solomon Islands. The experience for these female members of the task group also enriched their experience and gave them a greater understanding of what is like to live as a woman in the Pacific. They were able to converse with mothers as they shared their experiences of childbirth and child rearing. At other times we listened as women shared their experiences of the challenges to accessing birth control and female specific health services. Listening to their stories of challenge, trouble and heartache brought valuable insight to the lived experience of a Solomon Islander woman.

Through these engagements, relationships were built with key women in each community and faith group. This type of activity has the capability to support the Defence Gender, Peace and Security Mandate LOE 5: International Engagement:

> *to ensure that Defence continues to show leadership in all aspects of gender equality – both domestically within the Department and globally. Defence is committed to integrating gender, peace and security principles across the breadth and complexity of Defence international engagement.*[1]

A Chaplain deployed in the Pacific Region, notably high in religious observances and with a high percentage of Christians in most of those countries, can make a significant contribution to this LOE. Specifically, this contributes to the activity:

> *Defence will continue to work with other government departments and agencies, civil society and likeminded partners, to advocate for the advancement of the Women Peace and Security agenda and assert the rights of women, men, girls, and boys in all international fora.*[2]

Chaplains can engage with local police chaplains, corrective services chaplains and other key religious and non-government organisations and gain understanding into the specific challenges facing the local population. A Chaplain who is female can further this understanding by engaging with women's groups, shelters, other women's services and speaking at women's only church services.

As my time continued, it was evident that each engagement with a key leader was exceptionally positive. Every interaction was friendly and open, relationships were built and many times resulted in invitations to speak at church services, attend events and visit locations.

Supporting the Deployed Task Group

As is customary for any Chaplain in a deployed task group, there were times when support was required by those I deployed with.

What is worth mentioning for this particular deployment is the questions and queries that were relatively consistent when it came to how to engage and understand the local community and its religious underpinning. The ability of the Chaplain to explain, encourage and give insight into how to engage in the local community without causing offence was particularly helpful to those who were regularly interacting with local Solomon Islanders.

The Chaplain can continually enlighten the other members with information pertaining to specific religious observances, upcoming events, and other related matters. This helped advise planning and ensured task group related activities were not planned on a certain day or in a particular way that would prove detrimental to relationships and future engagements.

Looking Forward

Chaplaincy has a unique opportunity when we consider our engagement in the Pacific region. Many Pacific nations have a highly religious underpinning that interlaces throughout all they do and how they approach policy, international engagement and local community interactions and responses. To enable greater understanding and to facilitate stronger relationship building, the presence and interaction of a Chaplain is necessary. This extends to educating ADF members on the specific religious customs, traditions, observances, festivals and gender perspectives that they will find themselves participating in and having to take into consideration as they move throughout the region.

Having Chaplains engaged in and contributing to the planning process prior to deploying in the Pacific region would support ADF Doctrine as outlined in ADF-A(J)-3 Gender, Peace and Security. Specifically, Chaplaincy can have significant input and offer advice when:

> *understanding societal gender dynamics and considering the impacts, needs, priorities and influences of men, women, boys and girls (and acknowledging these may be different) to understand how gender may affect the mission (including second and third order effects) and conduct of engagement.*[3]

This is especially true with respect to religious considerations in relation to the gender perspective, particularly as the Pacific region experiences this differently to Australian/Western society.

Consideration to the ability and willingness of the Chaplain to engage across many denominations is worthwhile. It is important that, although there is comfort and ease in the religious setting of our own tradition, interaction with the broader religious dynamic informs and educates a more complete picture of the local religious culture.

Conclusion

I believe it is important to have both male and female Chaplaincy representation in the Pacific region. There are inherent strengths and value to both. Much can be learnt by engaging with the local men and the local women. Both of these perspectives are vital to give a complete picture to inform our understanding and to improve and sustain relationships. The nuance a Chaplain brings is due to the particularly religious nature of many of their cultures.

The value of the Chaplaincy capability to contribute to building strong relationships across the Pacific is proven. Chaplaincy in the deployed environment, particularly in the Pacific region, is unequivocally fit for purpose.

Postscript: Reflection from the Joint Task Group Commanding Officer, LTCOL Joshua Higgins

ADF Chaplaincy provides both a critical internal and external function for deployed forces – assisting with cultural acumen development, increasing and deepening community ties, sustaining the force during adversity, and providing timely and astute command support advice during mission planning and execution. This deployment affirmed the value and utility of ADF chaplaincy when teamed with female engagement, and when resourced with the personal attributes of gregariousness, cross-denominational awareness, and a willingness for cultural immersion.

Chaplain Kerrie Frizzell dances with the women at Gilbert Camp as part of her Key Religious Leader engagement

Endnotes

1. Defence Gender, Peace and Security Mandate: From Rhetoric to Reality, 7.
2. Defence Gender, Peace and Security Mandate, 7.
3. ADF Application Doctrine, ADF-A(J)-3 Gender, Peace and Security, Edition 1 (2022), 10.

Who is my neighbour?: A reflection on the changing nature of religion and spirituality within the Australian Defence Force

Chaplain Renton McRae

Chaplain Renton McRae is presently posted to Joint Operations Command and has served in a variety of postings and deployments during his time as a soldier and chaplain within the Australian Army.

Introduction

I cannot remember her name nor what she looked like, and the entry in my diary is deliberately vague, but on a cold winter's night, she had waited until dark before quietly knocking on my door. In her desperation, she explained she had nowhere else to turn. Born into a devout Muslim family, she now worked as an interpreter for the US Army. Adding to the cultural complexities, she had formed an intimate relationship with a US soldier. Between heart-wrenching sobs, she explained that he had returned to the US on leave to see his family and, whilst home, had unexpectedly died. No one knew of the relationship, and now he was gone forever. In her suffering, she needed someone and found her way to an Aussie chaplain. Overcome with grief, she struggled to explain that she believed in her parents' faith but did not share the same views. She told me I would not understand, to which I replied, "I am not religious, but I am a spiritual man who knows God." Instantly, her demeanour changed. Any differences in our religious beliefs were now irrelevant as she proclaimed we were of the same spirit. I listened, and when the tears stopped, she left as quietly as she had appeared.

From the earliest days of our nation's militia, "God botherers" were, in the eyes of many, an unwelcomed intrusion projecting an aristocratic expression of morality and judgement. It is arguable whether anything has changed within today's military. The general attitude towards religion remains unreceptive, but the nature of spirituality resonates deeply within the people of Defence. For most of the world"s people, religion and spirituality are synonymous; one describes the inward spiritual nature of faith, the other the outward form of religious tradition, ritual and ceremony. Religion and spirituality can be described as the two sides of the same coin. However, a significant cultural shift in beliefs and language has seen a new interpretation of spirituality over recent generations. As traditional forms of religion have declined, a growing hunger within the human spirit has emerged.

The Power of Faith

This article does not diminish the significance and place of religion within Defence, but emphasises that it is not religion (nor the uniform) that unifies and gives validity to chaplaincy, but faith – the spiritual dimension of life. Army Chaplaincy's Strategic Plan 2023-25 states:,

> *"The vitality of Army chaplaincy is its spirituality…" "A spiritually vital chaplaincy allows chaplains to assist with developing humanity's character and spiritual dimension. Chaplains have a well-developed worldview and spiritual lived experience that enables them to assist others in making sense of their own beliefs, values and behaviours. It also enables chaplains to support members to live in accordance with their view of the world."*[1]

In the opening story, I stated I am not religious, emphasising the place of the spiritual. The reply was an intuitive response to a person in crisis. Herein lies a paradox. Professionally, I am a religious person who does not define himself as religious. I accept the importance and place of religion,

but the object of my faith defines my spiritual identity, not the outward forms and beliefs of religion. Such a statement may be confusing and contentious for some, but it speaks to the current divide between religion and spirituality. More importantly, it addresses the effectiveness of a multi-faith chaplaincy model.

Australian sailors, soldiers and aviators have long identified with the spiritual nature of an inward faith. Many may not be able to express what being spiritual means, but they know it has little to do with outward religious practices. The acceptance and effectiveness of the chaplain often relies upon which of the two they present. When asked, "Who is my neighbour?" Jesus responds with the story of the Good Samaritan, revealing the answer as the one who showed mercy and compassion.[2] In contrast, those in the story bound by religious laws and traditions rejected the one in need. Their actions defined their attitude and behaviour, and their religion perpetuated division and exclusivism. Chaplains face the same risk. The story of the Good Samaritan invites the chaplain to ask, "Is my theology (beliefs) a hindrance to my accepting and caring for others?" "Does my interpretation of the "truth" cause me to reject those who differ from me?" More specifically, "Is my obedience to the traditions and practices of religion greater than the object of my faith?" The assumption is that religious dogma limits the expression of compassion and mercy to anyone outside the same homogeneous group. Nothing could be further from the truth regarding military chaplaincy.

Within a multi-faith chaplaincy, the parable of the Good Samaritan captures the essence of what Command expects from its chaplains: to serve all personnel and their families without bias or judgement – including the atheist and the agnostic, regardless of nationality, gender, race or religion. However, with the decline of Western religion, there are voices that oppose the place of certain chaplains within Defence. A militant secular humanism opposes Christian chaplains within a secular ADF. Such opposition is not anti-religion but anti-Christian and reveals itself by its contempt. The argument has little basis in what chaplains actually do and their value to Defence; instead, it is driven by an agenda to remove the influence of Christian beliefs from the public space. At present, such a view does not attack other faiths and sees value in multi-faith chaplaincy, but its ideology undermines the Defence value of respect and denigrates chaplaincy as a whole. The weakness of such a worldview is that its rejection of religious beliefs denies the function of the human spirit, which underpins the moral authority of military leadership and character.

Faith and religion

Addressing the nature of faith, religion and beliefs, James W. Fowler, in his book *Stages of Faith*,[3] draws upon the influential work of comparative religionist Wilfred Cantwell Smith. Fowler highlights the distinctive differences between religion and faith, stating, "Faith is not always religious in its content or context".[4] He defines faith as "our way of finding coherence in and giving meaning to the multiple forces and relations that make up our lives. Faith is a person's way of seeing him -– or herself in relation to others against a background of shared meaning and purpose."[5] There is a similarity between Fowler's definition of faith and the ADF definition of spirituality.

> *Spirituality is that aspect of humanity, which refers to the way individuals seek and express meaning and purpose and the way they experience their connectedness, to God, to self, to others, to nature, and to the significant or sacred.*[6]

Drawing upon the many decades of Smith's work studying the world's religious traditions, Fowler concludes that *faith*, rather than belief or religion, is the most fundamental category in the human quest for relation to transcendence. Faith, it appears, is generic, a universal feature of human living, recognisably similar everywhere despite the remarkable variety of forms and contents of religious practice and belief.[7] Smith's work makes a clear distinction between religion and faith and goes so far as to say we should not identify faith with beliefs, proclaiming faith is greater than what we believe if we recognise that our beliefs are merely "the holding of certain ideas." The challenge is when religious beliefs are equated to faith. As Fowler reminds us, "We do not have faith in a proposition or concept. Faith, rather, is the relation of trust in and loyalty to the transcendent about which concepts or propositions - beliefs - are fashioned".[8]

As a values-based organisation, Defence relies upon the inward development of character to produce the behaviour its values define. Compassion and mercy come from the moral character within the heart or the human spirit. The parable of the Good Samaritan reveals the danger when our beliefs justify behaviour that negates our responsibility towards others or "our neighbour". Another take on the parable illustrates the danger. "A man travelling from Jerusalem to Jericho was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes and money, beat him and left him half-dead on the roadside. A priest came along, but when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road. Then a Levite came along and saw the man, but he too passed by. Lastly, a social worker stopped, examined the man, looked concerned and declared, "Whoever did this needs help". My apologies to the social workers who demonstrate genuine compassion and care. Apart from revealing the self-righteous nature of religious hypocrisy, the parable illustrates the danger of separating the heart from the head or when beliefs do not match actions.

Faith and beliefs

Fowler provides a historical insight into the language of faith. In the classic writings of the major religious traditions, the language dealing with faith never speaks of it in ways translated by modern meanings of belief or believing. Rather, faith involves an alignment of the heart or will, a commitment of loyalty and trust.[9] Fowler traces the change in meaning from the sixteenth century to the nineteenth century, where secularisation and modernism defined a new form of consciousness that construed knowledge as empirically demonstrable facts. It came to see faith as a belief or a belief system.[10] To hold to the church"s beliefs or creedal statements was evidence of belonging, regardless of the state of one"s heart. By the twentieth century, the consequences of an intellectualised faith and a reliance upon the outward forms of religion saw the decline of the Western church. By putting its trust in its beliefs, it effectually separated the head from the heart. Historically, religion divides rather than unites when it conditions the mind to judge and accept others based on what they believe. In practice, it says I cannot accept you or approve of you unless you hold to my beliefs.

Fowler explains how the original creedal statements that declare, "I believe" or "We believe" reflect the Latin term *credo*, being a compound form of cor, *cordia* - "heart", or the Greek *kardia*, from which we get the English word *cardiac*. It was from baptism in the early church that the credo - "I believe" reflected a declaration of faith, "I give my heart to…" "I pledge my allegiance to Christ."[11] True Christian Faith and community (the church) rely on a transformation of the heart. It certainly requires an intellectual acknowledgement based on beliefs, but faith relies not on what you believe but on whom you believe. Faith is a function of the human spirit or the heart. It is what governs the intangible and non-physical reality of what we call love – the essence of what binds and sustains relationships and community. From the heart comes the compassion and mercy needed to love and serve our neighbour.

Faith promotes unity

Multi-faith chaplaincy brings a diversity of beliefs and traditions to the military, providing a rich heritage of experience and knowledge. It is the lived experience that enables chaplains to assist others in making sense of their own beliefs or worldviews. Acknowledging the diversity of faith recognises the most fundamental part of our being. As Fowler reminds us, faith is generic, a universal feature of humanity. We have much to learn from each other. The example of Islamic

prayer is a position of submission to the one in whom you have given your heart. To bow down in prayer is a familiar practice within the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. The position of the head or the mind in this posture is deliberately lower than the heart, symbolically declaring its submission. In this position of worship, the heart is open to receive. For too long, much of the Western church has measured worship by whether its hymns, songs and sermons are doctrinally correct. Doctrine is foundational but should never be conditional to accepting and loving others. Faith is what motivated me to say, “I am not religious, but I am a spiritual man who knows God.” On other occasions, religion allows chaplains to connect with those whose lives are shaped through religious practices.

The strengths of a multi-faith chaplaincy are revealed within the religious, spiritual and pastoral pillars, each critical to serve the soldier, sailor and aviator and their families. As religious leaders, chaplains provide a priestly role that bridges the sacred and the secular. They carry a moral authority essential to the rites of passage that give meaning, purpose and identity within family and community. As spiritual leaders, chaplains are the ““captains of the soul,”” a light in what is often a dark world. The issues of the heart, mostly shared behind closed doors and sealed with confidentiality, give chaplains a credibility that contradicts outward judgement. To connect with another”s heart is to touch that which is sacred, where respect, honour and trust create an unspoken bond of gratitude. The combination of the two former pillars shapes the third, the pastoral pillar. The Shepherd serves through the strengths of brokenness and humility, being present for others in their time of need.

A new paradigm

A multi-faith chaplaincy requires a new leadership paradigm. The challenge of a centralised leadership model to function within a joint capability presents chaplaincy with the need for unity, not based upon beliefs but faith built upon respect for others. Chaplaincy must, however, retain the unique cultural strengths and identity of each service, operating under a joint leadership (ideally within the same office location). A joint environment nurtures collegiality, cooperation and efficiency, which are critical for operational preparedness. The subjective and personal nature of religion and spirituality arouses deep emotions. This is not always true amongst our geographical neighbours, as the chaplains” strategic plan highlights, “Australia’s connections in the world are regularly built with partners and nations where faith and spirituality is woven through the fabric of their society and daily life. Faith-based chaplaincy assists *Defence* and its people to better understand the place of faith, its impact on decision making, leadership and relationships, and can make us better neighbours and partners”.[12]

Conclusion

The three pillars of the religious, the spiritual and the pastoral combine to provide Defence with a capability unequalled within other organisations. This article draws upon the scholarly work of James W. Fowler to show that while faith and beliefs are not the same, they are complementary. The rise and acceptance of the spiritual provide the language and means to build greater relational unity, not only within a multi-faith chaplaincy but across Defence. The development of the inner-self speaks to the issues of the heart and the human spirit and allows us to answer the question, “Who is my neighbour?” A critical question at a critical time, strengthened by a multi-faith chaplaincy that provides “subject matter expertise and lived experience in all of the world regions represented in our partners and region”.[13]

Endnotes

1. Royal Australian Chaplains Department (RAAChD) Strategic Plan 2023-25. Released September 2023. The Plan is consistent with Army Planning guidance including Army in Motion, the Army Business Plan, the Army Order and the Army People Capability System Campaign Plan.
2. Luke 10: 25-37.
3. James W. Fowler, *Stages of Faith, The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning,* Harper Collins Publishers, New York, 1981.
4. James W. Fowler, *Stages of Faith, The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning,* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1981), Fowler, p. 4.
5. Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, p. 4.
6. Timothy J. Hodgson and Lindsay B. Carey, *Pastoral Narrative Disclosure – An Intervention Strategy for Chaplains to address Moral Injury* (ANZCUR, 2022). Pastoral Narrative Disclosure is part of the Moral Injury treatment process and in alignment with the World Health organisation’s Spiritual Intervention Codings. Moving beyond the traditional terminology associated with religious or pastoral care, the revision of the WHO-ICD-10 “Pastoral Intervention Codings”, subsequently led the World Health Organization to reaffirming the various chaplaincy services into five categories of “spiritual intervention” – Spiritual assessment, Spiritual counselling, guidance, or education, Spiritual support, Spiritual ritual, and Allied health intervention – spiritual care. An updated ADF definition of spiritual care is presently in draft form, integrating spiritual care within ADF healthcare. It is expected to reflect a similar wording as that presented within the Pastoral Narrative Disclosure handbook.
7. Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, p,14
8. Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, p,11
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10. Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, p,13
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12. RAAChD Strategic Plan 2023-25, p,5
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ANZAC Dawn Service entwined in Religious Practice: Australia's common national identity

Ms Georgina Brooks

Ms Georgina Brooks is currently completing year 12 studies, looking to a professional career that both supports and promotes health and wellbeing. In February 2023 she was recognised with a South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE) Year 12 Merit Award, for her study on the connection between the ANZAC Dawn Service and Religious Practice. Whilst not referenced in her paper the role of Chaplains remains pivotal in ensuring the sacred memorialisation and storytelling of ANZAC remains authentic.

Anchored within Christian religious practice, the memorialisation of ANZAC Day provides a point of connection to Australia's common national identity. Christianity, the human response to following Christ (John 12:44-45; 1:12-14) provides the ritual form[1] as the interpretative lens[2] to understand the commemoration of ANZAC in the modern era. Despite ANZAC Day becoming in the words of Professor Inglis a civil religion[3] for all, Christianity and the Dawn service remain integrally entwined. In memorialising through monuments, narrative, and ritual, religious practice provides restorative solidarity through a transcendental understanding of recalling or making present the sacred pledge made to the fallen – 'We will remember them'.[4]

Anzac Day (25th April) marks the anniversary of the first major action fought by ANZAC forces during WWI. Despite the Gallipoli campaign failing, with over 28,000 Australians either killed or wounded, the ANZACs left an indelible legacy on the national psyche[5] and profoundly contributed to Australia's cultural identity. The Architect of Anzac Day - Canon Garland - institutionalised an occasion of reverence, silence, and healing in remembering the sacrifice of the fallen, by incorporating an ecumenical Dawn service and Veterans March.[6] Its intent was to provide consolation and atonement to a grieving nation seeking answers to the loss of tens of thousands of men killed on distant battlefields.[7] Reverend Garland appreciated the need to craft a pertinent and fitting service for all Australians no matter their religious or non-religious affiliations. A recent community survey[8] supported this, with 100 % of participants agreeing that contemporary Anzac services remain relevant in continuing to respect the sacrifice of the fallen. The scope of this national day of remembrance has since been broadened, to include the Second World War and subsequent warlike or peacekeeping missions around the globe.

In providing restorative solidarity, memorialisation preserves past memories of people and events, through local monuments, collective ceremonies, and commemorations.[9] Although early memorial services were held in Australia, New Zealand and in Westminster Abbey (London), it was Reverend Garland, the convenor of the Anzac Day Commemoration Committee (January 1916), who truly understood the sacred promise. He created for Australians, a transcendental service that was beyond national interest and invoked a higher accountability founded on the sacred pledge to remember the fallen.[10] Reverend Garland drew from All Souls Day and fashioned a public liturgy that reflected the Christian requiems for the dead, not unusual given that 96% of the nation were Christian[11] and included symbolic elements such as the two-minute silence and laying of the wreath, thus weaving together grief and hope.[12]

As a public display of worship, the founding rituals within the Anzac Day service reinforce the religious influence. Hence, to remove the sacred transcendental Christian elements would severely compromise the Anzac phenomenon.[13] As custodians of the ANZAC Day service, the RSL have issued the following guidance; an introduction, hymn, prayer, an address, laying of wreaths, a recitation, the Last Post, a period of silence, the Reveille, and the national anthem, many of which bear a liturgical aspect and significant religious meaning.[14] Held before dawn, the service recalls the wartime front line practice of 'stand-to' which encourages participants to have a more permissive and open attitude towards prayer and the divine.[15] The inclusion of Christian hymns, prayer and the Laying of Wreaths (woven into a circle), provide solace and connection to the theme of hope in the resurrection for those killed in action. The recitation of the Ode taken from Laurence Binyon's poem, *For The Fallen*; "At the going down of the sun, and in the mourn, we will remember them", draws from Deuteronomy 16 ; the Passover ceremony, which recalls and gives thanks to God for delivery out of slavery.[16] The Last Post, a mournful cry of death, the silence, a period of waiting in anticipation, broken by the Reveille which marks the birth of a new dawn, and the promise of eternal life beyond life's sacrifices.

The Christian references within modern memorials, continue to reflect the religious narrative of passion, death, and resurrection. These elements feed into the overarching theme of contemporary memorials; the selfless sacrifice of the Fallen - "No greater love hath man known, than to lay down their life for their friends." (John 15:13) Inscribed upon many memorials and tombstones of soldiers at Gallipoli and on the Western Front, their actions image that of Christ, a view also held by 82% of survey participants. Through their suffering, sin and death have been conquered and replaced with hope, peace, and life for all the living (Romans 5:1-11). Such is the inclusive nature of Anzac that marginalised groups (Indigenous, LGBTQ+, and women) now take pride and place on this national day of remembrance sharing in something deeply spiritual.[17] Australians have not lost their desire to experience the transcendental nature of the service, noting that 'after two years of Covid cancellations, people flocked back to services across the nation'.[18] Or in the words of a Vietnam Veteran, 'there is something about it that appeals to the heart or soul which needs a religious part, not just some secular words or soul-less songs'.[19]

Standing alone, Christian practice and Anzac Day have their own distinct identities and meaning but entwined, they bind and unite a nation in a common identity; to keep sacred the memory of the fallen. As clearly defined it is the Christian elements within memorialisation that provide the form and transcendental bridge *to recall* and *make present* the selfless sacrifice of ANZACs. By understanding and realising what the fallen have done for the living and what they must do in return, gives meaning to the sacred pledge; 'We will remember them'. In gaining insight to how both serve to uphold the ANZAC phenomenon, provides the Australian community with the restorative solidarity to remain connected to a tradition, which continues to give meaning to its national identity.

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Australian Secularity: Spiritual Care in a Time of Transition

Rev Dr Christopher Turner

Rev Dr Christopher Turner is an Independent Researcher and Spiritual Care Educator, a Research Consultant for Meaningful Ageing Australia, and a Board Director with Spiritual Care Australia. He has published in the field of Spiritual Care in world leading peer reviewed journals. Christopher is a Spiritual Care Coordinator working in residential aged care for Baptcare.

Abstract

Spiritual Care is developing rapidly from its roots in religious care into a professional form of care that attends to human spirituality beyond the bounds of religious observance and conviction. The Australian Defence Forces, like other secular contexts such as public health and aged care, are engaged in rigorous conversation about the nature of this development and its implications for current chaplaincy models. A key question in the conversation addresses the nature of secularity and how it relates to spiritual care. This paper asks three questions that are aimed at generating thoughtful conversation and reflection on the nature of secularity. Firstly, what is secularity in the Australian context? Secondly, does secularity have a valid spiritual depth? And thirdly, what are the implications of a secular model of spiritual care? Without proposing definitive answers to these questions, the paper calls for ongoing conversation about an understanding of secularity that spiritual care could embrace as it develops its care in line with secular concerns.

The professional spiritual care sector in Australia is leading the transition from traditional religious based models of care, broadly known as chaplaincy or pastoral models, towards a secular model of care. Though the language is still widely disputed, and often used interchangeably, the adoption of the more inclusive language of spiritual care in many secular contexts is indicative of the transition to a secular understanding of human spirituality and corresponding models of care.[1] The transition from the assumption that spiritual care is provided by religious practitioners to the belief that professional spiritual care should be secular in nature and accredited by a professional association that upholds secular values and standards of care, requires us to look closely at the nature of secularity in the Australian context.

This paper was first presented at the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) Chaplaincy Symposium in May 2023 as a contribution to the discussion about how the providers of chaplaincy services in the Australian Defence Forces (ADF) can begin to think about secularity as a foundationally inclusive worldview for the future development of spiritual care. Spiritual care practitioners, including ADF Chaplains, work in secular contexts and for the most part support and value the professionalism that has developed through secular programmes of research and analysis. Nevertheless, it is controversial in some sectors that spiritual care is developing from its roots in religious care into a secular form of care.

I will briefly address three questions that I hope will generate a creative discussion about the secularity of spiritual care. What is secularity in the Australian context? Does secularity have a valid spiritual depth? What are the implications of a secular model of spiritual care? We will not arrive at definitive answers to any of these questions by the end of the paper. We will, I hope, have developed the questions in a way that facilitates our ongoing discussion of the transition as it inevitably impacts the contexts within which we work.

I am cognisant of the fact that the question of the relationship of religion to secularity in popular discourse is often approached in a combative mode. For many Australians of religious faith, secularity is understood as the primary threat to the freedom of religious communities to practice their faith in public life. For many Australians who are staunch defenders of the secular clauses of the Australian constitution, state funded religious practice represents a considerable threat to the values of reason and evidence-based practice in public life. We enter this discussion in the midst of contested space.

Secularists and those who are religious are alike in that, being human, they tend to caricature those who are perceived as their opponents. It is easier to do battle with an *idea* of your opponent than it is to gain proximity to your opponent and understand them in all their complexity. Religions are not as simplistically problematic as secularists sometimes suggest they are. Nor is secularity as simplistically problematic and anti-religious as the religious sometimes suggest that it is. Indeed, as I hope to demonstrate, there is such a thing as a person of faith who is also a secularist. The religious worldview and the secular worldview are not incompatible. All who are engaged in the discussion are deeply concerned about it. I intend to recognise this concern in the way I deal with the discussion.

In his introduction to his now famous lectures on the varieties of religious experience, William James expressed concern for those in his audience who might find his approach to the topic insufficient on the basis of its method. He said,

> we instinctively recoil from seeing an object to which our emotions and affections are committed handled by the intellect as any other object is handled... Probably a crab would be filled with a sense of personal outrage if it could hear us class it without ado or apology as a crustacean, and thus dispose of it. “I am no such thing”, it would say; “I am myself, myself alone.”[2]

It is with sensitivity for our “committed emotions” that I offer genuine attentive respect for religion *and* secularity and the concerns underlying these overlapping perspectives that I approach this discussion.

Paul Tillich asserted that it is in fact not possible to understand a religion without access to the spiritual concern at its depth. In other words, religion is not reducible to dispassionate analysis. To attempt to do so is to misapprehend it. To understand religion, one must feel its spiritual concern.[3]

Let me invite you to consider that the same must be said about what we call secularity in the Australian context. Just as the religious world view has at its depth a genuine spiritual concern, so does the secular world view. This acknowledgement is the basis of the method applied in this paper and that is clearly stated in the second of the questions I will be asking.

I want to invite you to ponder the prospect that it is not possible to simply label secularity as the enemy of religion. To do so would be to ignore the spiritual concern at its depth and to comprehensively misunderstand it in itself and the role it plays in the freedoms enjoyed by all religions and worldviews in Australia. Furthermore, to reject the secular perspective as a basis for the future development of spiritual care would ultimately risk confusing genuine care with a kind of therapeutic religious activity; a distortion of genuine care when that care is subject to the critical gaze of the secular public.

What, then, is secularity in the Australian context? Perhaps the place to start is the Australian constitution. It is not that the constitution necessarily defines what is happening in Australian social and public life. It is simply that the constitution sets the parameters within which governance and democracy function in Australia. As such, it is worth noting how it does so with regards to what

I would describe as secular limits to the influence of religion in public life and secular limits to the power of the state to define the nature of religious practice and identity for the Australian public.

It appears that the three aspects of the constitution that relate to a god or religion leave just enough room for Australians to operate on the basis of their own religious and secular assumptions. Firstly, the preamble of the constitution incorporates a theistic assumption in that it bases the intent of those drafting the constitution to rely on the strength of a non-specified deity. It is hard to see how this assumption could have any power to shape the public life and democracy of Australia other than to reveal the British colonial assumptions of those who drafted it.

Secondly, the oath of allegiance taken by new members of parliament calls on the help of a non-specified deity and is optional. The other option being an affirmation that evokes the autonomy and intention of the person making the affirmation. This inclusive approach can be understood as secular in intent; generating space for diverse expressions of commitment.[4]

Finally, the most defining mention of religion in the constitution is found in chapter 5 clause 116. Clause 116 makes it very clear that the state has no role to play in any religious activity, other than to protect the freedom of expression of any religion that functions within the law and to protect the state from any application of a faith test for any public office.

Australian Constitution: Chapter 5 Clause 116

116. Commonwealth not to legislate in respect of religion.

> The Commonwealth shall not make any law for establishing any religion, or for imposing any religious observance, or for prohibiting the free exercise of any religion, and no religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office or public trust under the Commonwealth.[5]

Here we have as close a statement of the separation of religion and state as we have in our constitution. It is clear that the state has no role establishing or enforcing a religious state and that religion cannot come into the question of eligibility for holding public office. So far, Australian courts have not found that this clause prevents the state from funding religious activities.

I would argue that clause 116 is a clear protection of diversity of religion and the separation of religion and state in Australia. These two principles form the basis of Australia as a secular state. Religions have thrived in Australia on this basis. The functions of governance performed by the state have also thrived on the basis of their truly diverse representative nature.

Does the constitution really help us to understand what secularity is in Australia? It is perhaps arguable that it does. I think that broader social realities such as the overwhelming public support for the inclusion of same-sex marriage in the marriage act is more indicative of the public pulse on this question. Most Australians who voted in the referendum (61%) voted in favour of an inclusive stance that recognises human diversity, over a broadly religious stance that determines social questions such as these on the basis of divinely revealed norms and ideals. This leaning towards inclusive diversity is indicative of a secular concern.[6] The idea of a secular *concern* immediately raises the question of the spiritual depth of secularity. How might we understand the nature of secularity that could lead us to an understanding of its spiritual depth?

Charles Taylor's now influential analysis of the secular mind and society is extremely helpful in the attempt to understand ourselves as a secular nation and a secular caring profession. Taylor outlines three ways that secularity is generally understood, the third of which is most enlightening for our question. Firstly, secularity is often understood as a non-religious world view and or an anti-religious perspective. The popular polarisation of the religious worldview and the secular worldview is a category mistake that misapprehends both. Though increasingly a popular perspective in Australia, it relies on the idea that secularity is itself a competing ideology at a pluralistic 'table'. Secularity, though containing ideological elements, must be understood as being the 'table' itself, around which the presenting ideologies subject their perspectives to the considered reason of the secular criteria. In Australia, the secular 'table' that structures the conversation is a complex framework of cultural, social, political, philosophical and religious values.

Colonial Christian values have played a significant role in shaping the values of Australian secularity. It is a mistake, therefore, to characterise them as polar opposites.[7] For example, Layson et al. mistakenly take the argument for a secular approach to spiritual care made by Phillip Hoglin as being based on the statistical evidence that religiosity is declining and secularity is increasing.[8] A closer analysis of Hoglin's argument, however, reveals that he does not conflate the increase in secularity with decreasing religion as such. Secularity is equated with greater diversity within the defence forces specifically. Hoglin does not argue that secularity is a barrier to religion. Rather, his argument is that secularity demands a more broadly inclusive approach to spiritual wellbeing.[9] That is his definition of secularity and it is unavoidably shaped by what Comte-Sponville calls "fidelity" to the formative values of Australian colonial culture, which include Christian values.[10]

Secondly, secularity is understood by Taylor to be a state protected 'public space' into which the full diversity of identities and views are welcomed and protected. This view, very much represented in Hoglin's argument, has significance for our question. It is the view that presents the social and political reality of secularity. It is the third understanding, however, that lays the foundation for an understanding of the spiritual depth of secularity. It is my argument that the third understanding gives us the most insightful basis on which to make our enquiry.

Taylor describes the secular mind as one that has lost its naïveté. The secular mind, when it pays attention to the claims of an idea, a social context, an argument etc. is always immediately aware that there are multiple and diverse other ways to approach the questions that arise. Each of these ways has a particular claim to genuine truth and understanding in the given situation that the secular mind seeks to assess according to the criteria of reason, science and the public good (ethics). The loss of naïveté, once it has occurred, is irreversible. The new perspective that emerges as naïveté is lost will always have its attention drawn to the contrasting voices, experiences, views and ideas that are present in the space.[11] It is crucial at this point in our discussion that we understand that in a society shaped by secularity there is hardly a mind that does not participate in this loss of naïveté. The mind that is shaped by faith is as secular as the mind that excludes faith in this sense. In a secular context like that in Australia, even the most religious minds are characterised by this loss of naïveté. The secularised consciousness chooses to respond with either dogmatic refusal of other perspectives in light of its own secular insight, or genuine participation in the secularity of the society within which it is situated.

I am reminded of an analogy for this that was drawn on by Graeme Garret.[12] The big all-encompassing and systematic ideas in the world such as the great systematic theologies and philosophies, are like the view that one gets when standing on a mountain top. When standing on a mountain top, we receive the impression that we can see a lot. We can trace an expansive landscape and apparently get the lie of the land. We feel like we can see more of the world. This is what it feels like to hold fast to big systematic ideas like those that undergird the grand systematic theologies and philosophies.

When we come down from the mountain top however, we realise that the impression that high places give us a better view of what is going on is simplistic and problematic. When we descend into the valleys, we discover the minutiae of the world. The seemingly infinite diversity and complexity of life comes into focus only when we gain proximity to it.

Recently, I was walking through the last remnant of unlogged forest in South Gippsland, a place called Tarra Bulga National Park. I noticed a fallen tree in the forest. The death of this one tree, left to lie on the forest floor, had become the occasion for an organic explosion, a myriad of life forms sustained in interaction with their environment. The coming into view of the reality of this dead tree and the diversity of life that it supports is symbolic of the loss of the naïveté of the mountain top. It is the realisation that the diverse complexity of life is what life actually is. Diversity is not a corruption of life. It is not life broken by sin. It is not representative of a teleological process that is aiming for the perfect view of the mountain top. The dead tree *is* life. Without this complex diversity there would be no life at all.

The secular mind, and by extension, the secular society, is a far deeper spiritual reality than the mere separation of religion and state. The secular mind has seen that no one vision, no single set of beliefs, no system of thought, can possibly hold all that is true, or all that there is to know about the world as a concrete situation. And newly endowed with this realisation the spiritual concern of the secularist is born.

Having discussed the first question of what secularity is in the Australian context, we now turn to our second question. Does secularity have a valid spiritual depth? What is the primary concern of the secular mind? What underlies the secular mind as its spiritual depth? Surely it cannot be reduced to a triviality such as anti-religious feeling! I think that it is only when we understand the spiritual depth of the secular mind that we will be able to see the place of secularity in Australia and apply it to the profession of spiritual care.

But isn't saying that secularity is a spiritual concern as nonsensical as saying that atheism is a belief system? As Ricky Gervais put it so eloquently, "Saying atheism is a belief system is like saying not going skiing is a hobby. I've never been skiing. It's my biggest hobby. I literally do it all the time."[13] But as the philosopher and theologian Paul Tillich has successfully argued, in my view, the only worldview that has no genuine spiritual depth is indifference.[14] And the secular mind is anything but indifferent. It is deeply concerned.

Of course, some secular minds are trivially anti-religious. I cannot suggest that they don't exist. I do not think that they represent the spiritual depth of the secular mind, however. And it is equally trivial of the religious mind to reduce secularity to anti-religious sentiment. The spiritual depth of the secular mind can be at least partially understood in terms of what Tillich called 'self-transcending realism'.[15] Self-transcending realism is the belief that knowledge of the truth of a situation is inherent in its concrete reality in the 'here and now'. And yet, at the same time and paradoxically, the self-transcending realist is convinced of the fact that the concrete reality of the here and now is limited, and in that sense can only contingently be the bearer of knowledge of truth. In other words, there is no other source of true belief than the reality of the concrete situation, and yet true belief must always be sought beyond *this* concrete situation due to its limits.

The pursuit of genuine knowledge derived from true beliefs, which are derived from a robust realism, thus becomes a key value of human reasoning. The secular mind paradoxically pursues understanding of truth in the real concrete situation whilst being critically aware that the real situation cannot hold anything like the final truth or all that is available to the human understanding. Therefore, the secular mind is a mind characterised by critical reasoning. It is for this reason that famous secularists like Christopher Hitchens, so trivially despised by so many of a religious perspective, said the following of the secular mind,

Our belief is not a belief. Our principles are not a faith. We do not rely solely upon science and reason, because these are necessary rather than sufficient factors, but we distrust anything that contradicts science or outrages reason. We may differ on many things, but what we respect is free inquiry, openmindedness, and the pursuit of ideas for their own sake.[16]

It would be hard to find a statement that more eloquently reveals the spiritual depth of secularity. The category of "necessary but not sufficient" is a clear expression of self-transcendent realism. Even the two primary criteria of secularity, science and reason, are subject to its spiritual concern. The pursuit of genuine understanding of what is true in the concrete situation cannot do without science and reason, yet neither of these is sufficient in themselves for the attainment of the secular concern.

Hitchens' statement recognises that any claim to authority in matters of truth must be subjected to critical reasoning that reveals its limits, including the limits of reason itself. As such, it will always understand the claims of religions that they are repositories of revealed truth, as spurious claims. The secular mind includes religious claims in its awareness of the suite of claims on the public 'table' for discussion. It intrinsically accepts that all claims to true belief and knowledge have equal right to be represented in the public space, including the religious. Yet it also demands that all claims to true belief have equal responsibility to subject themselves to the critical gaze of unfettered reason and scientific inquiry, including religion. It is this demand that so much of religious thinking resists in favour of the claims of supernatural revelation and the authority invested in them by tradition.

Secularity is like a 'table' around which all claims to truth and understanding are welcomed. A place at the table is not, however, unconditionally guaranteed. Those claims that are demonstrated to be false and or harmful, are rightly subject to the critical rejection of secularity.

The religious mind can and frequently does occupy a valid place at the secular table. It must not forget, however, that its place there is only guaranteed when it is able to humble its claims, subject itself to the gaze of reason and science, and embrace the presence of diverse other minds sitting at the table. The challenge for religious minds is to release the commitment to claims of universality and to embrace the new understandings of truth that emerge through the embrace of alterity in diversity. And once the naïveté of the mountain top has been lost, it can never be regained. Once the diverse nature of life has been glimpsed, visions of ideal states of perfection and systematic consistency can never be regained. In fact, much of the animosity of the secular mind towards the religious mind is directed at the capacity for religious ideals to misapprehend the world and do violence to it and to the vast diversity that is within it. de Goya's famous etching, "The Sleep of Reason Brings Forth Monsters", captures the driving concern of the secularist in this regard.[17]

The secular mind looks for the truth held in every concrete situation. It also looks for the limits of truth in every concrete situation. This is where it conflicts with religion. Religion claims a final authority for revelation. Any such claim for final authority will always be subjected to the critical gaze of reason in the secular mind, as will any other claim to truth or authority. In this we can see that secularity is not one world view in conflict with others. To see it as such is to succumb to the aforementioned category mistake. Secularity does not sit at the table with other perspectives. Secularity *is* the table upon which all claims to understanding and truth, all claims to validity, are tested, weighed and either incorporated or rejected.

Secularity as a resistance to the claims of revelation, held sacred usually by the powerful of the religion, has been part of religion itself throughout its history. Religious history is no foreigner to the secular voices within it.

Jan Huss wrote these words that hold within them the spiritual depth of secularism" "Seek the truth, listen to the truth, teach the truth, love the truth, abide by the truth, and defend the truth, unto death."[18] Against the religious certainty of the claim that truth resides only in the revelations of religions, the secularist employs a kind of Humean scepticism that evokes the observance of the scientific mind in keen collaboration with the properties of critical reasoning as the only genuine way to gain proximity to

what is actually happening in any given concrete situation. Reason works to gain proximity to both the presence and the limits of knowledge in any given concrete situation. It is precisely for this reason that secularity is the champion of diversity and inclusivity. All situations need to be included in order to gain genuine understanding and knowledge of their truth and the limits of their truth.

I have argued that Australian secularity has a genuine spiritual depth. On the basis of that argument I now want to address my third and final question. My third question is, *what are the implications of a secular model of spiritual care?*

Professional spiritual care bodies like Spiritual Care Australia, Meaningful Ageing Australia, and Spiritual Health Association increasingly understand the professional practice of spiritual care to be secular in the sense that I have outlined secularity.[19] Doing so is a recognition that the basis of spiritual care is an inclusive attention to every human expression of spirituality as a unique, and uniquely valuable concrete situation that demonstrates truth and is limited in its capacity to demonstrate truth.

In the case of the concrete spiritual life of an individual, 'the truth' is a moving and changing dynamic. This is why a secular approach is so applicable to a spiritual care model. The secular approach expects the spiritual life and experience of each individual to be unique and changing; dynamic! Truth emerges in new ways as the concrete situation of the person's spiritual life changes. The secular mind, when equipped with the critically reflective gaze of the attentive listener, expects this to be the case and does not pursue any ends other than the truth of genuine understanding. It is the capacity to pay attention to each human life as a concrete spiritual situation that grounds spiritual care more firmly in the spiritual depth of secularism than it does in the claims of religion. The claims of religion are teleological and therefore always tend towards nurturing responses to its claims in the spiritual lives of those in its care.

It is important to note here that a secular form of spiritual care does not exclude religion as part of the concrete situation. Secular spiritual concern necessitates that the religious forms of spirituality are attended to with the same careful and critically reasoned care. The claims of a person's religion on their life are considered to be just as subject to critically reflective reason however. Jesus of Nazareth was a master at this kind of secular attention to the claims of religion in the concrete spiritual life. "You have heard that it was said… but I say to you…" (Matthew 5:21-48 NRSV) is an example of a kind of secular critical reflection on the claims of religion.

Now, if we are paying attention we will realise that the spiritual depth of secularity is the same as the spiritual depth of Protestantism, demonstrated in Jan Huss' spiritual decree, which has been part of the entire history of Christianity and is not to be confused with the protestant reformation.[20] This spiritual depth is the life defining concern to pay attention to, and understand, the truth of every given concrete situation whilst recognising that the final truth is always beyond the concrete situation.

Religions declare a divine source of truth beyond the concrete situation. Secularity takes a humbler stance. It devotes itself to critically reflective reasoning and attention to the concrete and changing situation as both the container and the limit of truth. It resolves to discover an approximation to the truth that reflects the reality of life rather than any form of idealism, religious or otherwise.

The spiritual concern at the depth of secularity reveals what is required to understand spiritual care as an intrinsically secular form of interpersonal care. It is this context of spiritual care as a concern for the overall spiritual health and wellbeing of people that defines the parameters of our discussion. Spiritual care, as a form of interpersonal care that facilitates spiritual health, must be differentiated from some forms of religious activity that are concerned specifically with the function of the religion, rather than the care of diverse forms of human spirituality.

There are some key characteristics of human spirituality that determine the way we think about spiritual care. Human spirituality is characterised by the capacity to change and grow, by responsiveness to changing environments, by integration of experience in meaningful knowledge, beliefs and values and by the disintegration of dying.[21] As such, human spirituality is necessarily diverse. The difference derived from unique experiences in the world determines the diverse nature of human spiritual wellbeing. A society that is publicly inclusive, that is, in its constitution, laws, and culture, of diverse forms of human spirituality, can be called a secular society. The kind of spiritual care that pays attention to such a society and its spiritual concerns must be a secular kind of spiritual care.

French philosopher Simone Weil devoted her life to a secular attention to the suffering of her times. She refused to write about any situation to which she had not first sought to gain sufficient proximity in the attempt to genuinely understand it. Her devotion to the concrete situation was extraordinary. Though a pacifist, Weil enlisted to fight with the anarchists in the Spanish Civil War in an attempt to understand them and their concerns. Though a skilled philosopher, teacher and communist intellectual, Weil left teaching to work at the Renault factory in order to gain a better understanding of the concerns of the proletariat. On the basis of what she came to understand through that proximity, she abandoned her communist beliefs and ideals and wrote one of the most insightful essays critiquing its answers.[22] When the whole of Europe seemed enamoured of Hitler and the National Socialist movement in Germany, Weil went to Berlin to gain a better understanding of the concrete situation and wrote a prophetic warning in the French Press when no one had yet deemed Hitler to be the kind of risk he turned out to be.[23]

Weil epitomised the secular concern. She did not deem it possible to retain allegiance to any ideal, political, social, philosophical or religious, that could not stand up under the critical scrutiny of reflective reason on the basis of genuine inclusive attention to the concrete situation. What are the implications of a secular model of spiritual care? Insight into the answer to our question can be found in Weil's reflection on the value of attentive proximity to the concrete situation, "Attention is the rarest and purist form of generosity."[24]

It is this kind of unfettered, critically reflective attention to the concrete situation that must determine the nature of spiritual care as we develop it. We must not confuse this kind of care with the tasks of evangelism, or of the application of religious affirmations as forms of therapeutic intervention. The task of secular spiritual care is to pay attention to the concrete situation of the spiritual life in all its diversifying dynamics. All contexts within which professional spiritual care services are sought and provided must, for the sake of the spiritual health and safety of those in their care, transition from exclusively religious forms of care to secular forms of care.[25] To do so would mean to ensure the accreditation of practitioners by professional associations, rather than religious institutions, and education in the professional capabilities set by those professional associations.

The transition to a secular approach to spiritual care will enable contexts that are increasingly characterised by secular diversity, to provide a service that is genuinely attentive to the spiritual lives of people.[26] The spiritual life is in itself, an ever diversifying concrete situation responding to the complexity of life. A secular approach will bring the person as they are in the immediate sense into view as the focus of the attentive and active listener. The secularity of the attentive listener will generate truly accepting space for the intrinsic claims of every person as a concrete spiritual reality.

In order to know what is just in a person-to-person encounter, love listens. It is its first task to listen. No human relation, especially no intimate one, is possible without mutual listening... All things and all human persons, so to speak, call on us with small or loud voices. They want us to listen, they want us to understand their intrinsic claims, their justice of being. They want justice from us. But we can give it to them only through the love which listens.[27]

Endnotes

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11. Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (London: Harvard University Press, 2007), 1-25.
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13. Ricky Gervais. 'Does God Exist? Ricky Gervais takes your questions.' *The Wall Street Journal* (Dec 2010), https://www.wsj.com/articles/BL-SEB-57374
14. Paul Tillich, *Dynamics of Faith* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1957), 1-12. Tillich's understanding of faith as the most centred act of the personality incorporates conscious and pre-conscious elements of psychology. By doing so he associates faith with the integrating 'concern' of organic life itself. Thus, life is spiritual concern. Complete indifference to life is almost theoretical therefore. Secularity and atheism are driven by deep life affirming concern and therefore have spiritual depth in Tillich's view.
15. Paul Tillich, *The Protestant Era* (London: Nisbet & Co., 1951), 75-76.
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18. Tom Schwanda, 'The Legacy Of John Huss' https://www.cslewisinstitute.org/resources/the-legacy-of-john-hus, accessed 16 June 2023.
19. The definitions of all three of the mentioned associations are inclusive of diverse expressions of spirituality and make clear distinctions between spiritual care and the functions of any particular religion. https://meaningfulageing.org.au/definitions, accessed 23 June 2023. https://www.spiritualcareaustralia.org.au/about-us/definitions/what-is-spiritual-care, accessed 23 June 2023. https://www.spiritualhealth.org.au/about, accessed 23June 023.
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Though Eve's definition is derived from the health sector, it has broadly applicable merit for spiritual care professionals as the only research based definition of spiritual safety. Eve defines spiritual safety as '... the assiduous respect, acceptance and unconditional validation of a person or people, their loci of meaning and present concern; their spirituality.'
26. It is acknowledged that the specific set of spiritual care services provided by ADF Chaplains includes forms of religious care and ritual. A full analysis of how these services fit within a secular model is beyond the scope of this paper. The understanding of secular spiritual care argued for in this paper however, should be read to include all forms of spiritual care services provided in any context that is shaped by unique contextual factors.
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SPECIAL OPERATIONS COMMAND

CHAPLAINCY

The inside view for chaplains interested in serving within Special Operations Command – Australia
SOCOMD COMMAND CHAPLAIN 2023

Don't Drink the Kool-Aid: Chaplaincy within Special Operations Command – Australia

The SOCOMD Command Chaplain presents this article. The information within the article is unclassified, accessed from open sources, and draws upon the author's personal experience as a former Special Forces operator and Army chaplain.

Introduction

The allure of being "special" is hard to resist. So too is the dream of being the best. Within militaries worldwide, the best is generally associated with Special Forces (SF), often prefaced by the word elite, a label fraught with ambiguity. For some it arouses resentment, envy and jealousy, coupled with superiority and entitlement. Yet for others it endears respect, admiration and an almost mythical status. Such is the dilemma of Special Forces, shaped by a mix of half-truths, misinformation and myth. All of which thrive in a culture that exploits the image and brand for entertainment and personal gain. The SF world is a complex environment where fact and fiction overlap. There is an embarrassing amount of information and equipment available in shops and on the internet covering every brand of Special Forces to satisfy any interest. This article has a specific audience: its focus is on Army chaplains who may be considering service within the ranks of Special Forces.

Drawing from the experience of those who have served within Australia's Special Operations Command (SOCOMD – often referred to as the Command), this article seeks to inform and help prepare chaplains for a posting in a SOCOMD unit. It introduces the personnel within the SF community and the cultural influences that shape their lives, such as secrecy and security, protected identity status, the perception of elitism, and issues from the recent conflict in

Afghanistan. Special Forces units are generally characterised by high operational commitments that demand an equally high commitment from those who serve within their ranks. The criteria of what makes a chaplain a "good fit" to serve within an SF unit is similar to that which makes a chaplain a "good fit" in any unit. The message and the messenger must be authentic; they must know their audience and display the character and competency expected of their position.

Chaplains aspiring to serve within an SF unit may have received the advice, given by well-intentioned persons, to beware of drinking the Kool-Aid. The reference to Kool-Aid presumes the chaplain may cross a line, a line rarely defined but a line none-the-less. Historically, the phrase "Don't drink the Kool-Aid" refers to the mass suicide at Jonestown, where 900 members of a religious cult, led by Jim Jones, drank cyanide mixed with grape Flavour-Aid, incorrectly reported as Kool-Aid. The tragedy of Jonestown became associated in US politics and business with a blind obedience to the ideology and cultural norms within an organisation or institution. The Kool-Aid cliché inadvertently describes an unhealthy work environment, an environment often projected onto Special Forces by the implications of drinking the Kool-Aid. The above-mentioned advice applies not only to chaplains but is relevant for all service personnel, particularly those who serve within Special Forces.

The Special Forces community

Various layers of people (see Figure 1) shape the Command.[1] Each concentric circle describes the positional and relational dynamics that characterise the SF workforce.[2] At the centre is the operator. Closely related to the operator are the integrators and enablers. Everyone beyond these roles are outsiders, whether they wear a uniform or not. Within each role, security clearances determine the level of access to information, facilities and people. It is a unique and complex working environment where the left hand is often unaware of the right.

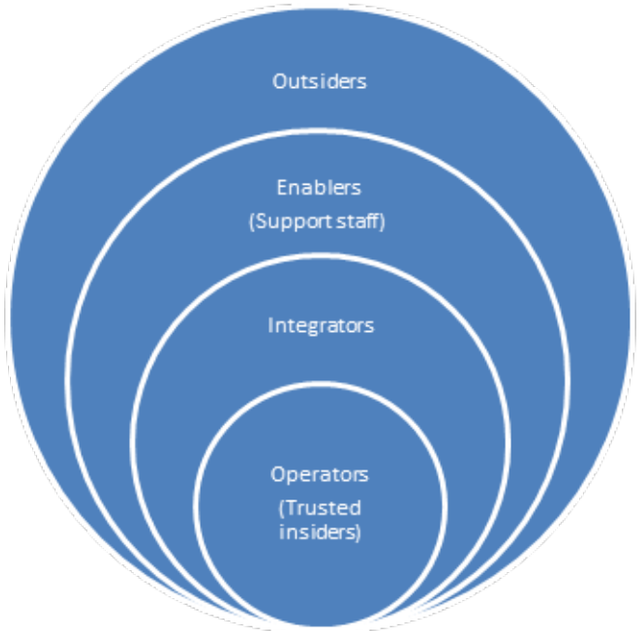

Figure 1: The Special Forces community

1. Operators

The term operator applies primarily to the trade of the SAS trooper and commando within the units of the 1st Commando Regiment (1 Cdo), the Special Air Service Regiment (SASR) and 2nd Commando Regiment (2 Cdo). It is not possible to post into an SF unit as an operator without first earning the title by completing a rigorous process of 'selection'. Together with a long reinforcement cycle (12-18 months) the process is like a long and painful birthing process into the community of Special Forces. The DNA of the SF family conditions how the operator interprets themselves and the world around them. There is familiarity in this amongst all uniformed personnel, however the greater the specialisation the more dominant the distinctiveness. The term 'badged' describes the operator, signifying they are qualified to wear the hat badge, parachute wings and beret of their respective trade. These three attributes, the selection process, the badge and their respective beret define the operator. The operator can remain in their respective unit and the SF community for the remainder of their military career and beyond.

The tribal nature of symbols such as hat badges, berets and wings evokes deep emotion amongst SF operators. Such symbols can also be a source of angst among some who belong to other tribes within the Australian Defence Force (ADF). Social researcher Hugh Mackay in *What Makes Us Tick?* explores identity and our need to belong, describing people as both herd animals and tribal creatures.[3] Herds are the small groups from which we draw friendship, mostly based on common interests, but it is from the tribe that we draw our sense of identity. Mackay maintains that identity is revealed through language, which underpins the tribe: "Language is the repository of tribal culture and identity" because language "reveals the code of our belonging."[4] The visual language of symbols communicate far more powerfully than words. To some outsiders these symbols might have negative connotations, internally, they communicate a sense of belonging that results in an inherent trust that transcends other aspects of ADF culture.

It is all about trust

Within SOCOMD there are layers of trust essential to defining the uniqueness of all relationships. However, these layers are subtle and may also undermine relationship. The further one is from the centre, the complexity surrounding that trust increases. In SF units, the operator is the trusted insider. In contrast to other aspects of service life, this trust is not transferred to others, nor is it dependent upon and validated through character and competency. It is a trust that unites operators as trusted insiders. Like a family, blood is thicker than water, although families can be brutal to their own. Such are the internal tensions that characterise tribes. Trust is always central to transparency and accountability, both personally and institutionally, and rises and falls on leadership and personal responsibility.

The 'special' in Special Forces

It is helpful to clarify the meaning of *special* in the title of Special Forces. Special Forces operate in complex and chaotic environments, in extreme circumstances, where there is increased strategic sensitivity and elevated risk. These factors require specialised skills that are beyond the role of regular forces. The designation of 'special' reflects the operational environment in which SF are required to serve in interests of national security. What distinguishes SF operators from regular forces is the process of their formation to prepare them for these environments. The process is extreme, transforming the soldier from being above average in comparison to their peers, to being a highly specialised individual. The average soldier, sailor and aviator may also be highly trained and specialise in many given fields. The key distinction of an SF operator is the formation of identity through the selection process which is entwined within their *raison d'être*.

Special Forces operators are highly motivated individuals who thrive in a competitive environment with minimal supervision. On average, they are older, more mature and experienced soldiers with greater financial stability. At the time of writing, the average age of an operator within 2 Cdo is 32. Operators have been described as "the one percenters, three times selected". Beginning with recruitment into the ADF (an initial screening process), individuals, once qualified, can voluntarily choose to seek selection for service within Special Forces (another screening process) with the hope of being selected and passing the Selection course (a further screening process). Passing the Selection course merely deems a candidate suitable to commence SF training. Then begins a long and arduous reinforcement cycle prior to the soldier commencing training as a qualified operator. In general, around 150 personnel are panelled on a Selection course of which an average of 40 will pass. From this group a little over half will be badged as operators.

The label of 'special' brings several intrinsic risks, elitism being one. It is difficult to think of elite without it depicting those who are powerful and influential, or the richest, or most intelligent, and those who lord it over others. Elitism is any behaviour that excludes others, based on an attitude of superiority that judges others as inferior. Defence defines elitism, or exceptionalism, as "the belief that an elite group should dominate or be granted special treatment and exceptions to the rules that ordinarily apply."[5] It also points out that, "The concept of elitism or exceptionalism should not be confused with being elite." Generally, operators do not struggle with a superiority complex that overcompensates for inadequacies. The selection process typically weeds out those with personality disorders, inferiority or superiority issues, and those whose expectations do not align with their capability.

SF flavoured Kool-Aid

The later years of the Afghanistan conflict proved an exception, revealing the danger of drinking the Kool-Aid. Within Special Forces, the metaphor of drinking the Kool-Aid represents the misconception of believing that special means 'superior'. This derives from an attitude that has many names: hubris, pride, arrogance, elitism, exclusivism, and entitlement. Tom Frame's book, *Veiled Valour* outlines the story of the Australian Special Forces in Afghanistan, covering in detail the background to the Brereton Report and war crimes allegations. Reflecting on the outcome of the Irvine Report (2018), an organisational review of Special Operations Command, Frame captures the sentiment of elitism or exceptionalism: "A sense of elitism brought with it a feeling of entitlement. 'Special' no longer meant different; it meant 'superior' and applied to individuals and not their missions."[6] Together with Frame, Chris Masters' book, *No Front Line* provides invaluable insight into the Afghan conflict.

There is a growing number of books describing in detail the allegation of war crimes committed by Australian Special Forces in Afghanistan. Each reveals how a perfect storm of events allowed a select group of trusted insiders to (allegedly) carry out "unlawful killings, cover-ups bashings and cultural deviance."[7] Now all of SOCOMD must bear the fallout of what Justice Brereton described as, "possibly the most disgraceful episode in Australia's military history."[8] Perth's SASR was home to the so called "rouge group" of insiders. Following the release of the Brereton report (2020) the Commander of SOCOMD addressed Perth's Campbell Barracks and is reported to have said, "it will take ten years to rebuild trust with the community and government."[9] He could have added it will take decades to heal the internal wounds of moral injury.

The mystical allure of SF and the Kool-Aid temptation originated mostly in Hollywood. Initially John Wayne re-fought the battles of WWII. From the mid-eighties Rambo paved the way for future SF warriors to save the American dream. Of course, in our modern era these depictions are not limited to Hollywood as there are any number of books, documentaries and video games that glorify war and celebrate violence, destruction and lawlessness. It is pure fantasy, a distortion of reality, historically shunned within the Australian SF, though often tolerated to provide a smokescreen of protection from the media and outsiders. The SF world is a dangerous environment for the narcissist.[10] They may be highly skilled and capable, but they have not matured into professional soldiers who understand the art of warfare. Instead, they embrace a form of military elitism, personified as the warrior. They have no place within Special Forces and denigrate the ethos of the true warrior spirit.

Newly badged operators become aware of the underlying challenges and temptations towards elitism and exceptionalism. Operators are mostly characterised by an attitude of humility that shuns publicity and any form of notoriety, a humility modelled from the leadership and example of those who went before them. The aberration of the alleged Afghan abuses is a blight on the SF reputation and casts a long shadow of shame over the SF family name. Consequently, Command-initiated changes beginning in 2015 have seen the continuous implementation of organisational reform and cultural renewal within SOCOMD.[11] Cultural reform has strengthened individual unit identity, underpinned by greater accountability and the moral courage needed to identify and challenge unacceptable behaviour. Cultural change has also influenced the attitude towards and the value of having effective unit chaplains.[12]

2. Integrators

The terminology used to describe the integrator and enabler has varied, reflecting the history and growth of SOCOMD. Operators have always relied upon the close support of integrators, such as signallers, medics, intelligence specialists and engineers. Integrators work in close proximity to operators. Like many families or tribes, there exists within SOCOMD a subtle pecking order based on seniority and profile. Recognition for trade skills, professional aptitude and parity have been major points of contention as newer SF units have matured into adulthood. The Special Operations Engineer Regiment (SOER) and the Special Operations Logistic Squadron (SOLS) have their own SF identity and wear respective unit hat badges. Soldiers within SOER undertake selection and their own reinforcement cycle, badged as a form of hybrid operator. Building on the theme of people as both herd animals and tribal creatures, SOER is neither lion nor tiger, but a form of heterogeneous Liger or Tigon. In the animal kingdom, most hybrids are infertile due to incompatibility of genes. However, Ligers and Tigons can reproduce offspring in their likeness.[13] 1 Commando Regiment is a hybrid blend of SERCAT 5 (part-time) and SERCAT 7 (full-time) operators and has the characteristics of the Liger. In SOCOMD's evolution, SOER – the Tigon[14] has developed, matured, and multiplied, providing an SF capability alongside their operator counterparts.

There is an attitude that greater financial remuneration means more importance, feeding back into the notion of special meaning superior. This issue of recognition is about identity, not remuneration, although the latter validates the former. Key leaders within SOCOMD continue to wrestle with the complexity of finding an agreeable solution. For SOER, once described as the red headed stepchild,[15] the unit has matured into a formidable Tigon, capable of leading the pack when required. Their competence is not in question, but issues of identity will always affect issues of belonging. The cultural strengths that underpin their identity as Engineers provide a healthy barrier against the internal angst that could otherwise cause division. It may also provide insight into the assumption that the Tigon is less susceptible to drinking the Kool-Aid.

The primary distinction between SOCOMD units centres on identity within the tribe. Integrators retain their corps identity. In contrast, to join the ranks of the commandos or SASR the operator must already be or corps transfer to Infantry. Although part of the Infantry corps, SF operators do not belong to the Royal Australian Regiment (RAR) that defines the identity of full-time infantry soldiers. This is not an issue for the integrator, for example, the Corps of Signals has a long and proud history within SF and enjoys or tolerates a healthy rivalry amongst badged operators. The integrators' corps identity is their greatest strength, defining their role and purpose within the SF community. Empowering individual identity within SOCOMD units should not be about uniformity or conformity but the synergy of diversity. Celebrating operational diversity with the Command is an indicator of organisational maturity.

3. Enablers and support staff

Enablers come from all ADF services and are highly skilled and dedicated to their role in SF. They are not required to undergo selection; although a rigorous screening process occurs prior to posting to SOCOMD. They enable the operator and the integrator to do their respective jobs, and include many highly skilled personnel like logisticians, ordinance specialists, technical trades, caterers and physical training specialists. The major difference between an enabler and integrator is their proximity to the operator. A variation of this applies to 6 Aviation Regiment, and 4 Squadron (RAAF) who support SF operations and require qualified personnel to pass their own selection process. The positive influence of enablers creates a highly motivated work force that strives for professional excellence. The negative consequence of a high tempo environment and demand for constant support can be personnel fatigue and tension. Until recently, enablers also identified as support staff, a term no longer used but equally fitting. Chaplains fit comfortably under the title of enabler with the same roles and responsibilities that apply in any regular unit.

Two types of people make up the enabler layer: the badged and the un-badged. The un-badged typically have a short-term relationship in SF. For many, by the time they have assimilated into the culture, they post on. The SF culture can create an ambiguity that causes frustration and disillusionment for some support staff, partly because of a general indifference towards administrative process and a perceived attitude of entitlement. Unconventional and clandestine warfare conditions require SF operators to excel in ambiguity and, sometimes; to create it. Characteristics of chaos, friction and uncertainty, along with violence and danger, that define the nature and character of war, can also define the SF training environment. Of course, the same applies for regular war-fighting units, yet SF units have greater freedom and diversity in how they apply these characteristics in training. These ambiguous conditions can be difficult for un-badged enablers. SOCOMD benefits greatly from a regular turnover of enablers who provide balance and accountability. Un-badged senior officers and NCOs work within SOCOMD partly to broaden the skills and knowledge base and to counter negative traits of tribalism.

The other type of enabler are the 'badged operators' who are posted into command positions, staff roles, training establishments and other supporting organisations within SOCOMD. As qualified operators, they remain trusted insiders. They are generally of senior rank and maturity and integrate relatively seamlessly with un-badged staff. The inclusion of senior commanders within the heading of enablers may be structurally incorrect but as a rule, the higher the rank and responsibility, the greater the humility and compassion towards those who put their lives in harm's way, particularly in training. They recognise the cost for every member within the Command and impact upon the wider family. Many have experienced the same selection process, stomped in the same boots, suffered and celebrated together. Many will have served with each other over many deployments and postings, bringing a wealth of experience to their roles. The integration of badged and un-badged service personnel in SOCOMD is a force multiplier that strengthens the joint capability across Defence.

4. Outsiders

Investigative journalist Nick McKenzie describes sociologist Samantha Crompvoets[16] as, "an outsider who felt comfortable on the inside."[17] This is the testimony of many who discover within SOCOMD the distinction between the working environment of the operator, which requires exclusivity, and the wider culture of SOCOMD that promotes inclusivity. Behind the mask of the trusted insider, with few exceptions, is a highly professional and humble soldier. Outsider is a term that generally applies to anyone not posted within SOCOMD or contracted to provide a specialist service. It means if you do not have a legitimate reason to be within the environment of an SF unit or Head Quarters (HQ) you should not be there. It is an unfortunate term but it helps to explain the unique role of the trusted insider. What is not acceptable in any context is arrogance, rudeness or an attitude of elitism that makes a person feel like an outsider. The negative connotation of the outsider communicates that you are not wanted or welcome, which is an affront to the values of military service and general courtesy.

Security, secrecy and trust issues

Security awareness training reinforces the principle that the more valued an asset the more layered the security controls. Many comparable specialised roles in the ADF also require high-level security clearances and specialised skills. In intelligence, signals, and cyber, the "need to know" and "need to hold" principles protect the integrity of classified information. What makes the SF environment unique is the acceptable level of risk and danger, particularly in training. The chaplain posted to an SF unit will not have access to many of the operators' training facilities and work spaces. The need for secrecy, and the inherent danger involved in training, dictates that chaplains should not expect to spend a lot of time, if any, in the operator's training and operational environments.

Environments of high-level security do not function in the same way that conventional workspaces operate. The usual expectation and requirement for transparency and open communication differ for those who are bound to secrecy and have access to highly classified and sensitive information. Trust, while essential, can be a vulnerability or a risk and is open to exploitation and manipulated for clandestine and nefarious purposes. Within a legitimised culture of secrecy, military personnel learn to avoid speaking about many things and are required to be intentional in what they do say. Conversations are often guarded and individuals can appear distant or unresponsive. These issues can be compounded the longer people work in secure locations. For those new to such environments, where a veil of secrecy exists and security clearances control the level of trust, it can take some time to adjust. However, for the majority it soon becomes familiar and normalised and they may be unaware how they appear to the outsider.

Information is power and depending upon the nature of the information and the level of authority attached to it, the necessity for secrecy can have a significant impact upon the nervous system. For some, this is not difficult and it may have little impact on their relationships. For others, it can negatively affect their personality and ability to build relationships or collegiality in the workplace, particularly if they lack social or emotional skills. For people with personal trust issues, working in an environment of secrecy may perpetuate distrust and suspicion, particularly towards outsiders. When a person cannot talk about their work with their partner or family and friends, it can have a negative impact on their well-being. The nature of secrecy can violate the principles needed to build healthy relationships and team cohesion. Expressions like "need-to-know", "don't ask, don't tell", or "What you don't know can't hurt you", undermine transparency and effective communication. The negative influences of secrecy can distort personality and in the worst case, contribute to an environment where a "code of silence" prevails.

Protected identity status

With few exceptions, all personnel, including chaplains posted into SOCOMD, receive protected identity status (PID). The restrictions surrounding PID are just one of the many adjustments and challenges chaplains face as they familiarise themselves with SF culture. It is not onerous, but it is important to not take the little things too seriously, and not be slow in asking questions. The perceived barrier of trust can be difficult to navigate, particularly if relational trust is your primary currency, as is the case with chaplaincy. The ability to provide pastoral care is challenging when phone numbers or work place addresses are not included in signature blocks or directories, and personal details are restricted. It can feel as if an invisible barrier prohibits relational connection. The chaplain should not take this personally (unless warranted) because with patience and perseverance, time allows circumstance to open doors – except if your security clearance prohibits entry.

The necessity of secrecy underpins the operator's PID, often confining their circle of influence to other trusted insiders and their families. The operator's working environment can become very exclusive, isolated from those who do not "need to know". Consequently, operators and their families can grow very close, where trust of the outsider depends upon the recommendation of another's credibility. Protected identity status is far more serious an issue amongst operators and integrators than it is for enablers. A unit chaplain made the following observation, "If our PID is compromised in a serious way the worst that will happen is we'll be posted to another unit, but for shooters, they risk losing their job, or the next deployment or worse, they or their families might be targeted for sensitive information." Appreciating the difference, along with the restrictions on the operator's working environment, will help the chaplain establish a work-life balance that makes the most of relational opportunities as they arise.

High tempo environment

Training demands and operational commitments ensure SF units are always busy. Personnel are on short notice to move, including unit chaplains. These restrictions, along with a busy work schedule and constant time away, affect all personnel and their families. While operators may thrive in the complexity of the high tempo work environment, where "need to know" fits as comfortably as their favourite pair of boots, it places considerable demands upon enablers. The chaplain may not always be aware of where unit members are or what they are doing. It can be difficult to understand the unit's battle rhythm, particularly when it appears to be non-existent. It also makes it difficult for chaplains to establish their own battle rhythm. The term "fighting for information", familiar to most chaplains, becomes much harder and requires constant diligence within an SF unit. Finding balance in the work-rest ratio and implementing strategies for personal wellbeing are essential in a high tempo environment.

Chaplaincy within Special Forces

Chaplaincy has a chequered service history within SF units and the Command. Many chaplains have served with distinction and their legacy continues to have lasting effect. For some, a posting within an SF unit has not been a positive experience. Instead, it has been detrimental to their health and well-being. The danger is not always from without, but sometimes from within the personality of the chaplain. The "wrong fit" describes the person who struggles to find acceptance, or lacks the confidence to integrate themselves within the SF culture, reinforcing the feeling that they do not belong. Chaplains who have been a "good fit" have strengthened chaplaincy's reputation and influence within the Command, reinforcing the importance of selecting the right people and ensuring they are well prepared for a posting within SOCOMD.

A posting within an SF unit is a highly rewarding and challenging opportunity to serve with many of the ADF's best-trained and motivated soldiers, sailors and aviators. However, it can be difficult to know who is who in a world where many do not wear uniform, or may wear a beard, where security clearances govern access to buildings and personnel and the "need to know" may exclude you from conversations. A former RSM insightfully suggested, "For the first year the chaplain is only a visitor in the unit." He was not saying that the chaplain is a visitor; rather, the chaplain will feel like a visitor. Overcoming any feelings and attitudes that reinforce the outsiders' credo is a critical part of assimilating into the SF world. The ideal chaplain needs a strong resilient spirit, a disciplined mind and a strong disposition. They need a high level of self-awareness and emotional maturity, where age, experience and personality combine to make the "right fit."

Chaplaincy and Kool-Aid

Kool-Aid suppresses moral courage, as compromise weakens resolve. The root is the same: hubris, entitlement and their associated foibles. The chaplain's "prophetic" role should help strengthen and when needed, challenge the moral and ethical standards of those they serve. In theory, it defines the chaplain's call to be set-apart, or to be counter-cultural. The spiritual disciplines of the chaplain's formation allows them to balance the tension that Christian chaplains describe as being "in" the world but not "of" the world, or to be light and salt in the world.[18] This makes little sense to the ordinary person dealing with the complexities of life, but it speaks to the heart of chaplaincy. There is a fine line between incarnating oneself into the military culture and remaining true to the calling to serve. In this light, to drink the Kool-Aid would be to compromise one's primary calling to be set-apart. Principally it is not about finding acceptance by assimilating into the culture or adopting the attitude and behaviour of those they serve. To do so is to risk crossing a line that undermines the chaplain's religious, spiritual and pastoral effectiveness thereby confusing one's identity. Nor is a posting to an SF unit for the chaplain who needs to feel "special".

Conclusion

The last two decades have witnessed extraordinary growth within SOCOMD, providing invaluable operational and organisational experience. Not all of it was good and positive however. The Afghanistan Inquiry revealed the dangers of elitism, when a sub-culture of exclusivism and entitlement allowed a deviance of behaviour to cause irreparable damage to lives and reputations. Consequently, cultural and structural reform continues to shape and build SOCOMD into a stronger and healthier ethical organisation. The importance of having embedded chaplains in SF units who are the "right fit" is of critical importance. Investigative journalist Nick McKenzie, commented regarding an SASR chaplain during the height of the allegations: "As they learnt to trust him, a small number of soldiers sought his counsel after returning from missions in Afghanistan. As Norton told Crompvoets what some had confessed, his eyes welled up with tears. It wasn't just soldiers who were broken, she had thought. The padre was also hurting."[19]

For the vast majority of chaplains who have served within SOCOMD, the experience of the label "special" has left an indelible mark upon their military service. The "right fit" is the chaplain who demonstrates the maturity and experience of a robust spiritual formation with the character, personality, and resilience necessary to serve in high-tempo, complex environments. The "right fit" requires a chaplain to be a person of integrity, authentically grounded in their spiritual and personal lives in order to be self-reliant in bearing the sensitive nature of the burden they carry. The ability to let go of one's ego and embrace true humility serves the chaplain and the SF family well. The chaplain must be willing to rise to any challenge, and importantly, to do so with a good sense of humour.

Endnotes

1. ARMY publication *Special Operations Command, Information Booklet* (available on the internet). The booklet outlines the Command structure, describes each unit within the Command, and a brief description of their role and history.
2. Another category or layer within the Special Forces community are the ex-service members. In the context of the military family, many ex-service members remain closely connected to Special Forces via official associations and relational networks.
3. Hugh Mackay, *What Makes Us Tick*, Sydney: Hachette Australia, 2010, p. 156
4. Mackay, p. 170.
5. Army Standing Instruction (Protective Security) Edition 1, 2022.
6. Tom Frame, *Veiled Valour*, Sydney: NewSouth Publishing 2022, p. 249.
7. Mark Willacy, *Rouge Forces*, Sydney: Simon and Schuster, 2021, p. 2. See also, Samantha Crompvoet's *Blood Lust, Trust & Blame*, Monash University Publishing, 2021; Tom Frame's *Veiled Valour*, Sydney: NewSouth Publishing, 2022; Nick McKenzie's *Crossing the Line*, Sydney: Hachette Australia, 2023; and Chris Masters' *Flawed Hero*, Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 2023.
8. Chris Master, *Flawed Hero*, Sydney: Allen & Unwin, p. 197.
9. Nick McKenzie, *Crossing the Line*, Sydney: Hachette Australia, p. 289.
10. An insightful article on institutional narcissism: https://www.google.com/l?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwiAtJusr6uAAxVCClgKHVj5CfsQFnoECA8QAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fcore.ac.uk%2Fdownload%2Fpdf%2F188080241.pdf&usg=AOvVaw16lvTKRvzVfhkwOl6C5iqf&opi=89978449
11. Transformation of Special Operations Command since 2015. This 20 page document outlines the journey from the "self-identification of catastrophic cultural and professional shortfalls within the Command during 2015 and then into the self-initiation of reactive remedial actions in 2016. These initial gains were consolidated through a number of subsequent actions such as Special Operations Commander – Australia (SOCAUST) 90 Day Review presented to the Chief of Army's Senior Advisory Committee (CASAC) in 2017 and the Chief of Army's (CA's) directed Irvine Review in 2018." Since 2018, further Campaign Plans have driven transformation, through a systemised process of rigorous review and assessment."
12. The 2020 Force Structure plan recognises people are Defence's most important asset – Annex D Afghanistan Inquiry Reform Plan. Version 1.0 July 2021. The chaplain has a mandate to remind commanders and leaders of the vital link that represents the tension between command and leadership – their moral responsibility.
13. Madeline Masters, *What is the Difference Between Ligers and Tigons?* https://animals.mom.com, accessed 19 July 2023. As a matter of interest, 1 Commando Regiment is also a hybrid blend of SERCAT 5 and SERCAT 7 operators.
14. The term Tigon has no official or unofficial connection with SOER. However, SASR operators are colloquially known as 'Cats'.
15. Chris Masters, *No Front Line*, Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 2017, p. 451. The reference is to the early era of SOER known as the Incident Response Regiment (IRR). SOER formed in 2012.
16. SAS war crimes were exposed by me. Then, my car was repossessed (smh.com.au)
17. McKenzie, p. 73.
18. John 17:11, 14-15; Matt 5:13-16.
19. McKenzie, p. 84. I would like to acknowledge and honour Chaplain Stephen Brooks CSM (AKA Adrian Norton :) who demonstrated moral courage in confronting unacceptable behaviour and the arrogance of many within SASR and SOTG who stone-walled his efforts to challenge the internal culture of the Regiment.

Can Chaplaincy have a Focused and Integrated Purpose Supporting Warfighting?

Chaplain Matthew Stuart

Chaplain Matthew Stuart is a Uniting Church Minister who is currently serving as the Army COORD Chaplain to 3 BDE AHQ in Townsville.

Abstract

There is a rich history of uniformed chaplains serving in war and peace alongside ADF sailors, soldiers and aviators. With the release of the Defence Strategic Review (DSR) and the changes that flow from that this is an opportunity to look at the future of chaplaincy as a force multiplier. Drawing from principles from the past and holding onto the *ministry of presence* that chaplains have been known for now is the time to ask how will chaplaincy in the Army be *focused* and *integrated* for future conventional warfare. Drawing on the current experiences from the 3rd Brigade a new set of principles are explored for chaplaincy to be fit for purpose in the Combat Brigades.

Introduction

The Australian Army for over a 110 years has had uniformed chaplains provide support, hope, care and honour to soldiers across wars, peacekeeping and international engagement. From Chaplains James Green and Stanley Reid during the Boer War to the 200 plus Chaplains we have across the Australian Defence Force today. My observations of that history would be that chaplains were successful due to four principles that enabled an effective ministry of presence: freedom of movement, higher acceptance of personal risk, adherence to international law, and recognition of faith being important to soldiering. These enabled the reputation of chaplains through their famous ministry of presence to be seen as a force multiplier.

This paper is a reflective activity as I come to the end of my first six months as the Coordinating Chaplain in the 3rd Brigade and wonder about the future of chaplaincy in *high end warfare*. I draw upon my previous chaplaincy postings that included 6 Brigade, 1 Brigade, and The Australian Army recruit training centre, "Kapooka," to now find myself coming into the 3rd Brigade during a time of returning to a focus on high end conventional operations and organisational change out of the Defence Strategic Review. Even though the nature of conflict is not changing its character is, as to the environment not to mention the technology. My experience so far has indicated that the principles of the past can no longer be expected by chaplains and are not necessarily agreed to by all commanders.

This paper offers thoughts around the notion of "force multiplier" and exploring how this might look in a mobile combat brigade. My intent is not to offer a final word on chaplaincy or to suggest a prescriptive right style for chaplains to adopt, each chaplain must work that out within the context of their posting with the soldiers, commander, and their respective chaplaincy team. My aim is to provoke a debate within the RAACHD and to encourage a conversation within wider Army about how individuals and the organisation develop a focused and integrated chaplaincy support to the moral component of fighting power.

Force Multiplier

Since I first came into Army Chaplaincy I have heard many talk about the force multiplier that chaplains can be. This has been identified as the chaplains playing a part in promoting emotional, spiritual, and mental wellbeing delivered through the five pillars of chaplaincy: religious care, spiritual care, pastoral care, character development, and advice to command. Current joint chaplaincy policy outlines the role of chaplaincy as "support to all, hope to those in distress, care to the sick and honour to the dead."[1] How this equates to being a force multiplier *at the coalface*, in battlegroups during warfighting, can be difficult to articulate.

As this reflection is my attempt to articulate how I see chaplains being a force multiplier it would be right to start with what I mean by force multiplier. There are many definitions though they are often similar, simply with similar words exchanged.[2] I am going to write about this concept from the Oxford University Press definition:

> *The effect produced by a capability that, when added to and employed by a combat force, significantly increases the combat potential of that force and thus enhances the probability of successful mission accomplishment.*
>
> Oxford University Press[3]

When I have been questioned by my civilian colleagues what exactly is my role as an Army chaplain, particularly in supporting soldiers in war, my response has not changed in the decade of my chaplaincy: "in the most uncomfortable and incomplete simplicity, my role is to help a soldier remain focused on their mission and task, and to know that I will be there at the end to help them to also pick up the broken pieces of their soul." Joshua Casteel in 2008 suggested that the laymen's translation for force multiplier was *something other than bullets or bombs that helps you kill your enemy.*[4]

It is often best to go back in history before planning for the future and so I want to unpack three of the principles I highlighted earlier: freedom of movement, higher acceptance of personal risk, and recognition of faith being important to soldiering. These principles come from my own reflection in seeking to learn from the stories of chaplains who had served in combat.

As a new chaplain it is pressed upon you the importance of ministry of presence, to always aim to be where the soldiers were, getting in and getting dirty. The idea of having the *freedom of movement* to be able to go where a chaplain wanted, regardless of the condition, goes as far back as the landings at Gallipoli with Chaplain John Fahey. Chaplain Fahey disregarded orders for all available space to be given to combatants and as the only Australian chaplain to participate in the initial landing at Gallipoli did so declaring that "his duty was to accompany the men."[5] Senior and mature chaplains recount memories of times where chaplains were transient shifting between the green and white space of exercises while carrying their mobile phones, and generally seemed to always appear exactly where they were needed.

When I first came into chaplaincy I received a photocopy of an exert titled *The Doctor and the Chaplain*, it gave the account of a doctor and a chaplain crawling forwards in the dark of night to set up an aid station in no man's land before a major offensive. As the battle moved over their position the chaplain would help drag wounded soldiers to the Regimental Aid Post. The chaplain had set up a brew area handing out tea and hot chocolate while the wounded waited stretcher-bearers to carry them rear. The *higher acceptance of personal risk* was held in high regard when we hear accounts from the Second World War in New Guinea where soldiers distinguished between the 'chocko chaplain' and the 'combat padre' where there are accounts of wounded Australian soldiers being rescued by a chaplain.[6]

The idea of a chaplain raising spirits and instilling a renewed will to continue fighting has been an important aspect of ministry of presence. The *recognition of faith being important to soldiering* was once famously expressed by General Montgomery at celebrations of the victory of El Alamein when he pronounced that "I would as soon think of going into battle without my artillery as without my Chaplains." For a long time it was understood that religion was the foundation of morale, Montgomery took this further to insist that it was the chaplains "who had laid the moral and religious foundations of the victory at El Alamein."[7]

Mobile Combat Brigade

There are a great number of amazing accounts of chaplains in the last twenty years providing valuable and unquantifiable support to members and their loved ones. I would like to think I have contributed to this. For me the last three years have been in a training establishment and I have posted to a Combat Brigade that I have no previous experience in. What I have observed is that there have been significant changes with technology that have enhanced the protection and mobility of battle groups, enabling a greater dispersion of forces into smaller elements. This technology has meant new unique challenges for the delivery of chaplaincy which is exasperated by the recognition for the need to prepare land forces for the changing character of modern warfare, as we have seen in the recent conflict in Ukraine.

I want to propose three new principles, with a fourth for coordinating chaplains in a Brigade Headquarters – *position, function, relational trust and technical responsibility*. These principles are in their early development, coming out of the living conversation around the delivery of chaplaincy. The 3rd Brigade chaplaincy team is exploring how we provide the ministry of presence that is a force multiplier, as we seek to support dispersed mobile battle groups that have a focus on tempo for the delivery of conventional warfighting amongst a civilian population. In writing this paper we are only just starting to theoretically explore the technical functions of chaplaincy with exploration into the practical aspect only just initiated. Alongside this there is also the question of how do Philanthropic agencies also contribute to the moral component.

The four principles could be split into the two force structure recommendations made in the DSR, *a Focused and Integrated Force*.[8] There has been a specific focus on chaplains having a diverse experience across the units of Army, posting between combat and training establishments and even joint units. There was the sense of a chaplain, in a classical and very Christian perspective, of being all things to all members or what we might remark a *Jack or Jill of all trades*. Alongside this was the clear distinction that though we could provide chaplaincy between services there were still very clear boundaries. I would take this even further to suggest that though there has been an emphasis within policy for chaplaincy care to be considered as part of the multi-disciplinary health team to units it is still the chaplain who is the initial provider who is usually forgotten in the specialist care.

There is no doubt that chaplains are fortunate in that they are the uniformed human care focused capability remaining in most units. As the Army's technology increases so too does the limit in vehicle capacity and availability, a chaplain cannot always simply jump in the back of a truck or grab a vehicle to head across a battlefield. The first principle is that of *position*, where the chaplaincy effect should be *focused*. As we have played with this principle the following ideas have developed:

1. Battlefield Clearance Team (BCT). Two thirds of the chaplain's role are around the sick, wounded, and the dead. Though this aspect of conventional warfighting is very rarely exercised, we can anticipate that our battlegroups are going to be faced with that reality quickly. Being placed within the BCT will enable the chaplain to be able

to move forward to be seen by the BG (Battle Group) as *one of us* providing the care and honour deserved of their mates. There can be a sense of no longer having to be concerned about what will happen to their peers, the Chaplain will look after them, so that soldiers can return to preparing for the next objective.

2. Regimental Sergeant-Major's Car. There is the historical line that declared *there are no atheists in foxholes*[9] a modern counterpart perhaps could be that *war magnifies the virtues of some but it exposes the character of all*.[10] The RSM has a role that pushes across the battlegroup to reinforce and provide encouragement at different moments during the actions performed by the combat teams. This enables the chaplain to have access across the battlegroup getting the pulse and perspective that can be provided to the commander. The chaplain can also be conduit for information: "Hey Padre I heard that A Company took a whooping the other day how they going?" "Padre, we haven't had any mail for months can you see who's eating our care packages?"

3. Combat Support Service Teams (CSST). Where there are a range of teams spread across the battlefield, such as enablers and gun lines, their life support potentially comes from the CSSTs that are dispersed. A chaplain within this team has the opportunity to surge to support battlegroup chaplains or to replace them in the case of death or the need to be removed from the battlefield. They also enable a support point for battlegroup chaplains by providing a conduit of information and pastoral care connection. A chaplain in this team enables the provision of continuity of support to wounded, providing appropriate ministrations to the dead, and their surviving comrades, similar to having a chaplain in the BCT.

Historically chaplains often took up extra regimental roles, particularly as stretcher bearers. As brigades seek ways of lessening the footprint of teams there is an expectation of people taking on additional responsibilities.

The second principle is *function*, where the chaplain can seek to focus their presence. As we've thought about this principle we have explored it through additional qualifications that may be appropriate for chaplains:

1. Combat First Aider. With the inevitable reality that battlegroups will take casualties, and potentially significant numbers that we haven't seen since the Second World War, there will always be the need for people who can provide more physical care then just a tourniquet. The qualification of a Combat First Aider (CFA) sits well with the role of the chaplain in providing *care to the sick* and enables the chaplain to be positioned in a range of teams.

2. Vehicle Drivers. Chaplains are non-combatants therefore should not able to be used as a "shooter." However, to be able to drive a vehicle means that the chaplain becomes versatile that they could be, again *positioned* anywhere across the battlegroup. Though the downside may be that the chaplain may be stuck with that vehicle the qualification can ensure that they are placed as the commander's driver or in the RSM's TAC or as a 40M with troop pods.

3. Mortuary Affairs Officer. This is a role that on exercises is rarely practiced. My experience has been that within units mortuary affairs are viewed as a role that any logistics officer should be able to deliver this capability. If Chaplains were to be trained as mortuary affairs officers every battlegroup and formation can enter into combat with the confidence that when this capability is needed there is a person who will be able to take control of the process and ensure that their members are treated with the honour deserved. Attached to this is the responsibility that chaplains will have with battlefield burials and dealing with enemy dead.

The hardest transition I have had to go through as I've moved from support chaplaincy (being based in a unit) to a coordinating chaplain (in a brigade headquarters) is how dislocated from the direct need I've become. My way of dealing with this is having confidence and trust in the support chaplains, and hopefully providing them with the support that they in return have confidence and trust in me. For chaplaincy to move away from the notion of being everywhere, and move into having an *integrated* presence across the battlefield. I think this can be done though the third principle and developing a notion of *Relational Trust*.

This is a difficult concept to describe and one that is already present, to an extent, within brigades that have a positive chaplaincy effect. We see this in two regards, commanders have a confidence that their members are going to be looked after even when their chaplain isn't available and there is a solid rear details plan in place. This we could argue is a mindset towards chaplaincy that requires chaplains to have a relevant and effective ministry of presence before forces disembark from Australia.

The commander of Artillery and Combat Engineer units, who have their members spread across the battlefield and often attached to different battlegroups can be assured that their members will receive support and care from the chaplaincy team. While all members can know that the chaplains on rear details will not just support their families but will also be ready to receive their mates repatriated and ensure they are honoured appropriately. Both of these mindsets allow for commanders and soldiers to remain focused and enabled to continue onto the next objective because everything that is important to them will be supported, cared for, and honoured providing them with the valuable hope to continue fighting.

Outside of support chaplaincy there is also the question of where does the coordinating chaplain fit within the headquarters construct. While we have often viewed the coordinating chaplain as a support chaplain with additional responsibilities my experience so far is that these are quite limited compared to that of a battlegroup chaplain. A recent conversation with a senior officer with experience across formation headquarters asked me what it would mean to view the role of the coordinating chaplain similar to that of an enabler liaison officer. This conversation was in regards to the contribution to the planning and control aspect of the headquarters.

I have often heard other coordinating chaplains talk about the wrestle of balancing the tension between supporting the people of headquarters and delivering product alongside other capabilities. I think there needs to be a *Technical Responsibility* that chaplaincy has often eluded to but as of yet not given attention to. This could look like the coordinating chaplain providing the liaison with the other enablers and with the Force Support Group (FSG), which of note comes into the effect of key religious leader and community engagement and perhaps more importantly the positive connection through the repatriation process.

Conclusion

There is much above that some would suggest is just basic chaplaincy, or that's already what a *good* chaplain should be doing. Perhaps. I would counter this view by pointing out that it is not written anywhere and most of what I have suggested has, during my time, been frowned upon or actively discouraged. Where it has happened and been effective has been as a result of individual chaplains just doing it or a coordinating chaplain supporting it on the quiet.

Chaplains have wrestled for over thirty years with the provision of support, care and honour to the joint mission during stability operations, non-combatants evacuation operations (NEOs), natural disasters, and emergencies (internationally and domestically). Chaplaincy has dedicated time to developing understanding and deployment while trying to tie in policy across the three services which required the reframing of training and management of chaplains. There is something uncomfortably essential to the provision of chaplaincy within the Australian Army that now requires attention and conversation: is there a role for chaplains as force multipliers to combat power in high end conventional warfare.

Endnotes

1. Department of Defence. Australian Government. *ADF Chaplaincy Services* (14 December 2021), 2
2. As I have been reflecting on this and reading, I have struggled to find in ADF doctrine a definition for "force multiplier". There is a breadth of similar phrases all in relation to kinetic or lethal platforms, such as in the application of offensive support or the use of UAVs, but there is nothing clearly associated with the human domain. The correlation to the moral component of fighting power requires a reader to have access to superseded doctrine, or a lot more time than I. As such I recognise that this piece is a reflective piece and the limitations of my argument.
3. Oxford Reference, 'Force Multiplier Effect', https://www.oxfordreference.com/display/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095827908
4. Joshua Casteel, 'Combat Multipliers', *VQR: A National Journal of Literature & Discussion* (Fall 2008), https://www.vqronline.org/vqr-portfolio/combat-multipliers#:~:text=The%20army%20calls%20chaplains%20"combat,that%20helps%20kill%20your%20enemy, accessed 4 August 2023.
5. Michael Gladwin, *Captains of the Soul: A History of Australian Army Chaplains*. Sydney: Big Sky Publishing (2013). Kindle Edition. Location 925.
6. *Captains of the Soul*. Kindle Edition. Location 2813.
7. *Captains of the Soul*. Kindle Edition. Location 2266.
8. Australian Government, *National Defence: Defence Strategic Review 2023 (Public Report)*. Commonwealth of Australia (2023), 53-54
9. This quote is generally attributed to U.S. Army Chaplain William Thomas Cummings from a field sermon delivered during the Battle of Bataanin 1942.
10. ADF Philosophical Doctrine, ADF-P-0 ADF Leadership, Edition 3 (2023), 11, https://theforge.defence.gov.au/adf-philosophical-doctrine-adf-leadership, accessed 4 August 2023.

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Recent ADF Developments in Key Religious Leader and Religious Community Engagement

Chaplain John Saunders

Chaplain John Saunders has facilitated the development of Key Religious Leader Engagement for chaplaincy within Defence as an AHQ Staff Officer for the Director General Chaplaincy - Army.

> *"When we take the religious faith of our neighbours seriously it shows that we take them seriously. It's seen as a real indicator of respect."*[1]
>
> Chaplain Majidih Essa, RAN

Chaplain Essa clearly points out the necessity of key religious leader & religious community engagement [K(Rel)L] in Australia's near region if our neighbours are going to believe we take them seriously and are treating them with respect. ADF K(Rel)L is defined as,

> *A chaplaincy operational capability for the ADF based on developing relationships with key religious leaders and religious communities in the AO that are consistent with a spirit of trust, mutual learning and support. The aim of K(Rel)L engagement is also to negate or diminish the negative impacts of military operations on the local population through a good flow of information and trust relationships.*[2]

For such K(Rel)L to be effective, it requires deployment of religious practitioner leaders, best suited to the context, who have been provided with solid doctrine and workable operating procedures, informed on previous operational performance, equipped for the task by sound training, and kitted with a functional toolset.

Historically, there is an extensive operational record of Australian Defence Force (ADF) chaplains' involvement in K(Rel)L going back to the Vietnam War. Today, ADF K(Rel)L has a very solid doctrinal base, provided by the Enabling Support Product 1 *Chaplains Support to Operations*.[3] What is now required is standardisation and systematisation of K(Rel)L activities through the provision of workable operating procedures, sound training, a functional toolset and a facility for passing on the lessons learnt.

K(Rel)L Training Program

In late 2022 I was asked if I could develop a K(Rel)L training program to deliver to Army chaplains at our regional conferences around the country in 2023. The intent was to provide a base-level familiarity and training on K(Rel)L for our chaplains as they face the likelihood of short-term deployments into the Asia-Pacific region in the near future. Consequently, since May 2023 Senior Chaplain Gary Pope and I have been delivering this training for Army and other ADF chaplains through the regional conference program.

This purpose of this paper is to outline the components of the course, discuss the tools and procedures now developed for K(Rel)L in the ADF, and to touch on some of the success stories from ADF chaplains who have recently undertaken K(Rel)L in our near region.

Originally envisaged as a three-day residential K(Rel)L training program, the regional conference training program is conducted over seven 50-minute session. Whist this somewhat constricted timeframe precipitates what might euphemistically be termed the "firehose approach" to training, participants are exposed to the critical aspects of K(Rel)L and have opportunity for peer-to-peer discussion as these are unpacked in the lessons. At the outset, the training program is designed as being both tri-Service (Navy, Army and Air Force) and multi-faith, given the multi-faith nature of chaplaincy across the ADF.

Firstly participants are given an introduction to K(Rel)L where they are made aware of the necessity for command-authorised and chaplain-conducted K(Rel)L in our region. This command authorisation is emphasised by the opening video presentation by Commander 1st Division, Major General Scott Winter, AM. Participants are introduced to the concept of chaplains being a "religious MODEM" for the ADF, which allows the military of the secular state to communicate effectively with the increasingly conservative religious nations in our near region. The success of K(Rel)L is highlighted by recorded testimonials from recently deployed chaplains. Finally, they become acquainted with the eight key principles which are the foundations for K(Rel)L.

First Nations and gender perspectives is a second key component of the course, both delivered via video from subject matter experts. A First Nations understanding is essential since ADF chaplains are increasingly deployed on domestic operations (DOMOPS) in response to natural disasters. A comprehensive understanding of what indigenous local knowledge can bring to disaster relief and how to approach First Nations communities is of clear importance. Likewise, a clear gender, peace and security lens is indispensable in all operations so that the whole community is engaged. It is vital that the voices of women are heard, as this will always add a different and more comprehensive perspective than only engaging the traditional leadership voices of men.

The course main focus is the conduct, firstly of religious area assessment (RAA) and then K(Rel)L implementation and formal engagement. The RAA process, as delivered to participants, is elaborated in the next section, but forms the backbone on effective K(Rel)L. The implementation of K(Rel)L is built out of the basics of chaplaincy – respectful relationships and meaningful two-way dialogue. Having said this, participants are exposed to the absolute requirements for prior planning and preparation which employs the full range of Task Group resources, followed by sound assessment and upwards reporting. None of this happens in isolation and participants are reminded that they should be working collaboratively with other agencies. Discussions involve working with information operations, Civil-Military Cooperation (CIMIC), public affairs, other nations, and non-government organisations.

Two final sessions deal with the pitfalls, caveats and practicalities of K(Rel)L. Firstly, this incorporates the very important intelligence operations caveats with regard to human terrain intelligence and psychological operations. Following from this, discussions include sensitive information handling; keeping on-message with government and command intents; maintaining integrity with local people; cultural awareness and sensitivity; making promises and giving gifts; dealing with injustices; peacemaking and, finally, finishing off well.

Feedback from initial course participants[4] identified some changes to the materials and the training methodology to make them both more manageable and digestible. On the whole, latter feedback has indicated that the revised course is on a firm footing.[5] As DGCHAP-A Kerry Larwill remarked at one conference, the coursework is not perfect, but it is solid training in this important space. It can be surmised that the training as it currently stands is fit for purpose at this time and participants feel they are informed enough to now commence K(Rel)L activities.

K(Rel)L Tools and Resources

Obviously, to undergird this training package, a solid range of procedures, tools and resourcing mechanisms have been developed and trialled for the conduct of K(Rel)L. I am indebted to recently deployed chaplains for their willingness to trial the K(Rel)L tools and provide constructive feedback in honing the tools and their operational utilisation.[6]

An effective Religious Area Assessment (RAA) undergirds the success of the K(Rel)L enterprise. To this end, K(Rel)L in the ADF context utilises two discrete analytical tools – a Country Cultural and Religious Overview (CCRO) and the ASCOPE PMESII tool, borrowed from the field of human terrain analysis. The CCRO poses three sets of questions investigating the cultural and religious landscape and the nexus of these two perspectives. The advantage of the CCRO is that it can be commenced prior to deployment employing readily available open-source materials.

The second tool, the ASCOPE PMESII, has been adapted to best fit the specific task of analysis of the religious nature of the human terrain in an area of operations (AO). In making this adaptation, the questions posed in the tool have a particular socio-religious focus. The aim of the ASCOPE PMESII is to orient a chaplain on the ground in the AO toward specific information and observations which build the religious picture of the terrain. This picture can then inform a task group's decision-making processes through the chaplain's advice to command. Chaplains are encouraged to diarise their observations, assessments, noted implications and subsequent recommendations.

The advantage of both the CCRO and ASCOPE PMESII is two-fold. Firstly, these mechanisms feed into the ASCOPE summary and then ultimately into the RAA Command Report, which is compiled through post-deployment analysis. The Command Report is the standing RAA for the specific area or country. A further invaluable product of the ASCOPE PMESII is the generation of annotated key contacts lists of religious leaders in the AO. Secondly, the facility these mechanisms provide is to front-load chaplains and commanders in future deployments. For instance, the RAA process informs the chaplain's Post Operational Report (POR). In essence a thorough RAA puts the next deployed chaplain, and indeed the next task group itself, on the front foot when it comes to the human religious terrain of the AO.

Having noted the above, all the best tools available, thorough analysis, determination of implications and recommendations, and writing of post-operational reports are exercises in futility if there is no information capture, storage, and dissemination mechanism. To this end the ADF K(Rel)L Portal, on the SharePoint platform of the Defence Protected Network, has been developed. The Portal is a storage facility for all K(Rel)L generated reports, multi-media, mapping, and open-source materials, catalogued by country, with easily accessible linkages into the Objective document library. The Portal ensures that all K(Rel)L activities and reports are captured, but then made available to future rotations through a given AO. In essence, the Portal ensures future rotations do not have to start from "square one" again.

K(Rel)L Effect

What effect has this systematised approach to K(Rel)L had for ADF chaplains deployed to our near region? What follows is a brief sample of activities and effects from chaplains trained in contemporary K(Rel)L method and equipped with current tools, who recently deployed to the Pacific.

Solomon Islands

Chaplain Haydn Parsons[7] (Churches of Christ), who had previously deployed during RAMSI,[8] deployed for a second time on OP LILIA, from February to April 2022. He contacted a variety of churches, schools, government officials and media around Honiara, reinforced positive messaging to local leaders, was invited to speak in local churches, and engaged with Australian and New Zealand's High Commissions.

At the Catholic cathedral, Chaplain Parsons was invited to preach. His sermon was live streamed and broadcast on Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation and he was subsequently invited to deliver an Easter message on the station. Hearing Chaplain Parsons' Easter message, the Governor General, Sir David Vunagi, GCMG, invited Chaplain Parsons for an audience and Chaplain Parsons took opportunity to pray for His Excellence.[9] Joint Task Group (JTG) command agreed that the K(Rel)L effort contributed significantly to the key messaging of Pacific relations, and subsequent success of the JTG mission by opening doors to communities through engagement at a religious level.

Australian Army Chaplain Haydn Parsons visits Archbishop Christopher Cardone at Holy Cross Cathedral in Honiara, Solomon Islands, while deployed on Operation Lilia. *20220407_cont_BaseleyJ_0013.jpg*

Chaplain Kerrie Frizzell[10] (Australian Christian Churches) deployed on OP LILIA from August to November 2022. Her deployment was significant, being the first female chaplain to deploy to the country. Having the chaplain as a female participant in community engagement became a point of difference from previous rotations which enabled the JTG to engage in otherwise neglected spaces. The effect of female engagement in the rotation gave further specific insight into human terrain elements, civil society needs and challenges, security concerns, education, healthcare and understanding family dynamics, including the needs of children.

Chaplain Frizzell observed that when the Chaplain accompanied the engagement team into a new community, the acceptance of the team was expedited due to the high regard given to religious leaders in the culture. Additionally, most community elders attend the local church. When the engagement team wished to meet with those elders, she would speak to the religious leader in that community who would make an announcement on Sunday to invite people to the community meeting. This proved to be a very successful methodology.

Chaplain John Dansie[11] (Uniting Church) deployed on OP LILIA from November 2022 to February 2023. Chaplain Dansie's main effort was to remain engaged with the heads of national churches as well as the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force chaplain and create new relationships with the heads of churches yet to be engaged and NGO's which had offices in Honiara. He participated in community development activities for the Anglican Church as well as the Christian Care Centre Women's Shelter. Chaplain Dansie also facilitated meetings and engaged with local communities in order to establish potential future community-based projects.

Kiribati

Chaplain Luke Drury[12] (Churches of Christ) had two short deployments to Kiribati, in August 2022 and again in March 2023. Chaplain Drury was the first ADF chaplain to deploy to Kiribati in recent times. During his first visit, he was able to establish contact with a broad range of church leaders as well as local schools. The Australian High Commission and Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) officials were impressed with the inroads Chaplain Drury was able to make into the community through K(Rel)L in such a short space of time (1½ weeks in country).

Chaplain Drury was able to provide his key contacts list to DFAT who in turn used the list to facilitate a roundtable discussion for the leaders of five denominations in Kiribati. The meeting was arranged to discuss social issues and address them together as churches. A repeat visit by the Chaplain Drury was planned to coincide with this churches' meeting and he was immensely helpful in this endeavour. Chaplain Drury noted that religious leaders are a focal point in Kiribati society and engaging the communities with the involvement of an ADF chaplain is extremely productive.

Chaplain Luke Drury attended a round table discussion with key religious leaders from Kiribati at the Australian High Commission. (L to R) Ms Rusila Takamatiata (AHC), Reverand Taateti Taumia, Chap Luke Drury, Rev Maerere Eria, Ms Rachelle Wood (AHC), Ms Kakiateiti Erikate (AHC), Rev James Bhagwan, President Neneburati, Father Iona Tatau and Pastor Taabua Rokeatau.

Chaplain Clint McGoldrick[13] (Catholic) deployed to Kiribati for a short term in July 2023. He experienced immediate preferential treatment by local people and doors were opened for engagement. Chaplain McGoldrick was invited to be involved in Mass at the Catholic cathedral on Tarawa and preached to a congregation of 850 people and conducted prayer and anointing for 150. This was a unique privilege. Chaplain McGoldrick was also able to meet with a variety of aid agencies and leaders of other faith groups.

Palau

Chaplain Steve Copland[14] (Anglican) participated in a short-term deployment to Palau during March 2022. This visit was new ground for ADF chaplaincy. Chaplain Copland engaged with variety of religious groups as well as local schools. He immediately noted the difference in the way he was treated when identified as a Christian minister. Chaplain Copland identified the pivotal role of church groups in communication to communities and the need for ongoing and consistent relationships being built with local leaders. Pivotally, Chaplain Copland worked closely with a CIMIC operator, Sergeant Paul Waples, who understood chaplaincy and what K(Rel)L could bring to the operation. Sergeant Waples was able to expedite engagement from a list of local religious leaders compiled by a previous US chaplain in 2021.

Chaplain Copland obtained permission from church leaders and was able to travel to outer islands (Peliliu, Angaur, and Kayangel) and offer sacramental ministry as well as other events. As Sergeant Waples[15] noted, Chaplain Copland was received with enthusiasm in the island communities (and indeed throughout Palau), many of whom had not received religious ministry for an extended period. Chaplain Copland was invited to pray at the opening of some offices for an electricity provider, with good effect in the community. By intentionally obtaining permission from local leaders and then providing supportive ministry, which took more of a back seat, he was able to build up the profile of the local religious leaders.

Tonga

Chaplains James Hall[16] (Anglican) and **Simote Finau, RAN** (Uniting Church) deployed at short notice on OP TONGA ASSIST 22 from 16 Jan 2022 – 2 Mar 2022, aboard HMAS ADELAIDE, and 2 -18 Mar 2022 aboard HMAS CANBERRA, together with Chaplain Maumau Monu (Uniting Church). The deployment was the Australian Government response to an undersea volcanic eruption and subsequent devastating tsunami. As a result of the strictures placed on activities and communications by COVID 19 and organisational paralysis in some government agencies, initial JTG response activities were severely curtailed. It was at this point where the K(Rel)L potential was fully realised and the relief operation was able to proceed.

K(Rel)L was acknowledged as the crucial point of connection between the JTG and impacted communities. Pivotal to the K(Rel)L activity, and subsequent JTG success, was the role of Chaplain Finau, himself an indigenous Tongan, in connecting with local church and community leaders, initially by telephone and then in-person. K(Rel)L connections with local church leaders and communities ensured economy of effort and that support was given to the communities most in need. It can be safely concluded that if it was not for the K(Rel)L activities of the JTG chaplains, the mission may well have had much lesser effect, or indeed have had to be abandoned altogether. As a witness to the chaplaincy K(Rel)L effect, Chaplain Finau was subsequently awarded an ADF Gold Commendation from Commander Joint Operations, Lieutenant General GC Bilton, AO, CSC.

Australian Army and Republic of Fiji Military Forces personnel repair a church pew on Atata Island, Tonga, during Operation Tonga Assist 2022. L to R: Australian Army Chaplain Major James Hall and Republic of Fiji Military Forces soldiers: Private Temo Qalobula and Private Junior Vitaukitoga, and Australian Army engineer Sapper Matthew Arthur.

Conclusion

Chaplain Kerrie Frizzell has called K(Rel)L a "vanguard ability" and "an effective force multiplier" due to the access to wider communities afforded through the door of religious engagement.[17] Chaplain Haydn Parsons likewise notes that, "Given the status of ministering persons such as Chaplains and their role of religion in public and private life in the Pacific region, the JTF Chaplains were afforded unprecedented access to the community."[18] Chaplain Frizzell further commented that K(Rel)L will "continue to give an enduring effect in the Pacific region".[19] Indeed, Senior Chaplain Darren Hindle, RAN, who also deployed on OP LILIA, determines that K(Rel)L – what he termed "religious diplomacy" – is "our most pronounced asymmetric strategic advantage in the region".[20]

It is safe to conclude that the current structured, systematised, and trained approach to K(Rel)L has instilled confidence in ADF chaplains to not only engage with religious leaders and communities in the Pacific region, but also when it comes to working with command, support agencies, High Commissions and DFAT. Though the formal K(Rel)L training program came after the deployments mentioned above, each chaplain was thoroughly briefed on the processes, procedures and tools available prior to individual deployments and many have since confirmed at the regional conferences the veracity of what they received and what is being trained.

One very important conclusion must be drawn with respect to ADF K(Rel)L from experiences to date: specific faith-based chaplaincy proves its fitness for purpose by being the sole vehicle for effective engagement of leaders and communities, both civic and religious, at the religious level. Again, as Chaplain Majidih Essa posited in the introductory quote to this article, religion must be taken seriously and the ADF's entry point to the religious societies surrounding us is greatly assisted by religious chaplains conducting K(Rel)L.

End Notes

1. Chaplain Majidih Essa, as quoted in Andrew Thorburn, "Faith in bridges of respect", Australian Government Department of Defence, News and Events, 05 Dec 2022, https://www.defence.gov.au/news-events/news/2022-12-05/faith-bridges-respect, accessed 15 Aug 2023.
2. *Australian Defence Force Chaplaincy Policy*, Enabling Support Product 1 "Chaplaincy Support to Operations", 2021, p4.
3. *Australian Defence Force Chaplaincy Policy,* Enabling Support Product 1 "Chaplaincy Support to Operations", 2021.
4. Feedback received via course evaluation forms completed at the conclusion of conferences.
5. *"This is the most beneficial chaplains training I have done so far."* (Brisbane conference) *"Extremely relevant and pragmatic for our work as chaplains. Can see this directly aiding our ministry."* (Perth conference)
6. Noteworthy is the contribution to test-bedding and subsequent development of tools by Chaplain John Dansie, deployed to Solomon Islands on OP LILIA in 2022.
7. Haydn Parsons, "Post Operational Report JTF 637.3 OP LILIA 22 – Chaplaincy." 06 May 2022.
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The Contemplative Chaplain: Inspiration from Eugene Peterson

Chaplain Darren Cronshaw

CHAP Cronshaw is a Baptist pastor who has served at Army School of Transport, Puckapunyal, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, Kapooka, and Defence Force School of Signals. He is also a Professor of Practical and Intercultural Theology with Australian College of Ministries (Sydney College of Divinity).

Fit for healthy balanced ministry

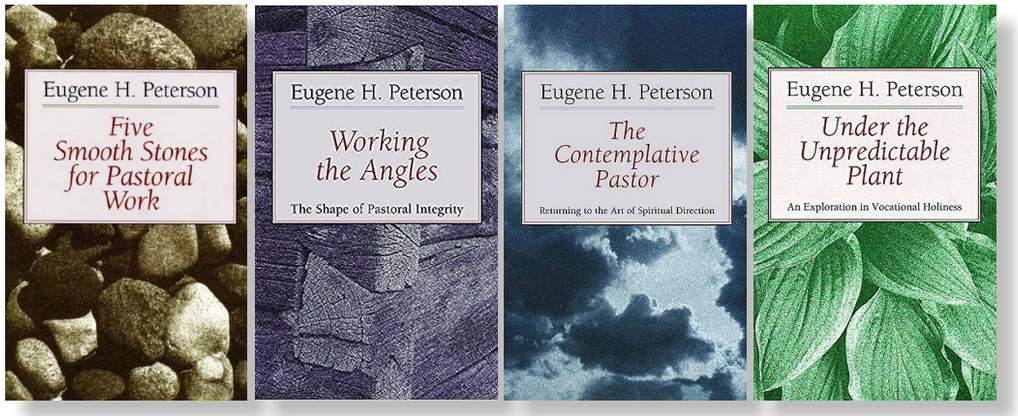
A key lesson I have been learning and relearning is that fitness for ministry and service requires work and prayer, engagement and solitude, action and contemplation. Father Richard Rohr leads the "Center for Action and Contemplation". He says the most important word in the Center's title is "and": "'And' demands that our contemplation becomes action; 'And' insists that our action is also contemplative."[1] A contemplative approach to spirituality and ministry helps balance my activist tendencies and busy lifestyle. Yet ministry helps keep me spirit grounded and gives me an outlet to serve. I cannot sustain ministry without the balance of contemplative renewal. Yet this kind of contemplative spirituality is not about retreating from the realities of everyday life and work as some kind of escape, but withdrawing for reflection in order to be better nourish my soul for service. Thomas Merton, mystic and social activist, comments about our need for deep soul-work, but for the purpose of deep engagement with the world: "the monk abandons the world only in order to listen more intently to the deepest and most neglected voices that proceed from its inner depth".[2] Contemplative spirituality at its best is thus not about retreating from the world completely, but giving due space for inner life and outer service *and* letting both inform the other.[3]

Eugene Peterson's pastoral theology

Recognising that the vitality of ministry is a grounded spirituality, in 2010 I focused my pastoral and spiritual reading on one writer: Eugene Peterson. He was my hero as a pastor who integrated his pastoral ministry with his spirituality and academic work. He has beautiful wisdom on the importance of spirituality, people focus, not being too busy, vocational contentment and spiritual direction as a model for ministry. I had been in ministry for almost two decades and was after fresh inspiration for grassroots pastoral ministry. I had just commenced in a new church and wanted stability and depth for the next decade of ministry. So I gathered Peterson's books. I invited pastoral and academic colleagues to a café each month to discuss them. Regular friends Nathan Nettleton and sometimes Ross Langmead joined me. As we read and discussed, I wrote my reflections.

Now in 2023 I am transitioning to full-time Army chaplaincy. Again I am looking forward to the coming decade of ministry but focused on grassroots chaplaincy. As an exercise in review of past decades of ministry, and preparing for the coming decade+, I return to Peterson. My method is to reread my reviews, discuss lessons with my supervisor and spiritual director, and write this reflection article with a focus on Peterson's relevance for chaplaincy.

Eugene H. Peterson (1932-2018) was an American Presbyterian pastor, scholar, poet and author of over 30 books. These included my favourite book on parenting *Like Dew Your Youth*, my favourite Bible paraphrase *The Message*, my favourite book on everyday spirituality *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places*, my favourite book on Bible reading *Eat This Book*, and Peterson's memoir, *The Pastor*.[4] The four books I focus on here are his highly formative pastoral theology series:



- *Five Smooth Stones for Pastoral Work* (1980; 1992)
- *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity* (1987)
- *The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction* (1989; 1993)
- *Under the Unpredictable Plant: An Exploration in Vocational Holiness* (1992)

Among these classics are my favourite books on pastoring and vocation. This article draws on what I wrote 13 years ago, distils lessons that were most valuable for pastoring, and offers concluding paragraphs of the most significant lessons for chaplaincy that I want to sustain.

***Five Smooth Stones for Pastoral Work* (1980, 1992)**[5]

Five Smooth Stones is classic Peterson in calling for an enthusiastic return to the Bible for pastoral inspiration and models. He explores pastoral work from five books of ancient Hebrew Wisdom, and how and where they inspire ministry and worship.

- *Song of Songs* for the pastoral work of prayer-directing

Peterson has a high view of sexuality and the body, as well as spirituality and prayer. In fact he sees sexuality and prayer as interconnected. Salvation frees us to relate in open, loving relationships with God and people. In Jewish tradition, Song of Songs has been allocated for reading at Passover. It reminds us that salvation on a cosmic and national scale is also out workable in ordinary domestic settings: "Pastoral work is a commitment to the everyday: it is an act of faith that the great truths of salvation are workable in the 'ordinary universe'" (p.33).

- *Ruth* for story-telling

Leading worship is relatively straightforward and contained inside church walls. From the front door of church and into the world, however, it gets messier. Ruth's story is a helpful model as a complex story of God working in the lives in common people who could easily have been overlooked. Ruth is traditionally read at Pentecost, celebrating Sinai, showing Israel where they fit in the larger story. We need to be storytellers too, and like a doctor takes a patient's history, put our conversational stethoscope to the heart of people's lives and hear what makes them tick.

Peterson has a high view of visitation as an opportunity to listen in to where God's story is engaging people's stories: "God's spy searching out ways of grace" (p.96).

- *Lamentations* for pain-sharing

Lamentations is a sensitive and earthy companion for companioning people through suffering. It reminds us that God recognises the breadth of suffering, from A to Z, but that it also has its boundaries. It invites us to express fully our ugly painful emotions, and not to hide from but to face suffering and any elements of God's anger, and to do so in community. Ministry shares suffering, grapples with pain and pleads with God to show us its meaning if possible: "Suffering in Lamentations is not an ominous disaster to be avoided but a difficult, healing operation to be accepted" (p.147).

- *Ecclesiastes* for nay-saying

Peterson continues to unravel biblical resources for ministry with Ecclesiastes. God is omnipotent and omniscient, so it's easy to expect God will do for us what we can't do for ourselves and tell us what we can't figure out. It was read at the Feast of Tabernacles, which celebrated enjoying life and God's bounty and blessing, but to remind God's people to seek God not primarily for God's blessings of answers and miracles. In the 21st century we need this just as much as people in 4thCenturyBC. We too have to say "No" to turning a religion that promises to fulfil our *needs* into one that manipulates God to satisfy all our *wants*.

- *Esther* for community building at Purim

Peterson has a high view of community and critiques individualism that undermines it. In a context of hostility, in Esther's time or our own, the story which is celebrated at Purim reminds us that God is committed to persevering with and maintaining God's people. Ultimately, we are in community as God's people not because of our choice or work but because of God: "The pastor must not fail to understand the congregation just as it is, as a historical community brought into being, warts and all, by God; and must not fail to be grateful for it, just as it is, warts and all, to God" (p.236).

Peterson says pastoral work originates in worship but extends into all of life – what we sing and confess we then seek to live out between Sundays. Pastors don't just send people out and look for them next Sunday but accompany them in the ordinary and everyday activities of life and illness, struggle and celebration, ambiguity and blessing. Peterson earths and elevates the calling of pastoral ministry and the importance of aspects of a pastors' craft including pastoral prayer, curiosity, visitation, sound exegesis, attending to God, and recognising God at work in "ordinary" matters.

Chaplaincy does not have the same congregational-facing ministry that Peterson wrote out of and for. Yet his appeal to be curious and attentive to God's grace in everyday life as we practice our craft of visiting and facing suffering and illness, and as we journey with struggle and celebration, is helpful for chaplaincy. It is even more important for a ministry that does not start in the congregation and extend into everyday life but starts in the everyday and sometimes traumatic experience of Defence members who are searching for healing and meaning in their lives, relationships and community.

***Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity* (1987, 1993)**[6]

Prayer, Scripture and spiritual direction are the three angles, Peterson suggests, that ensure lines of congregational ministry (preaching, teaching and administration) fall properly into place. Rather than

office management, image projection, voice control and creative plagiarism, all geared to make the pastor look good and church people feel happy, Peterson calls pastors back to their true craft. The shape of pastoral integrity requires three foundational acts:

- Prayer brings us to attention before God
- Scripture helps us attend to God in God's speech and actions
- Spiritual direction gives attention to what God is doing in a person.

Contexts vary – from self, to the history of God's people, to a person – but it is God to whom pastors pay attention. When diary demands, human needs, career ambition and driven-ness to succeed get me out of shape with my calling as a pastor or chaplain, Peterson offers welcome re-calibration.

Prayer

In an age of technology and progress, in the spirit of the Greek god *Prometheus* who sought to make life better for everyone with any available tools, Peterson summons pastors back to "cultivating a grace-filled relationship with God" (p.30). In response to requests for "a little prayer for the occasion please Pastor", Peterson declares there are no "little prayers". In the face of Enlightenment-inspired biblical criticism which sidelines the Psalms as the cries of a defeated though pious people, Peterson reminds us that Psalms were the prayer and worship out of which the prophetic developed. He reminds pastors that effective mission begins in prayer:

> "Anything creative, anything powerful, anything *biblical*, insofar as we are participants in it, originates in prayer. Pastors who imitate the preaching and moral action of the prophets without also imitating the prophets' deep praying and worship so evident in the Psalms are an embarrassment to the faith and an encumbrance to the church." (p.40)

Psalms are among the best resource to give language to our prayers. Athanasius said most Scripture speaks to us; Psalms speak for us.[7] They give me a language for my joys as well as pains.

Peterson argues Sabbath is the best gift to guard space for prayer. Not just as a day off or a utilitarian tool to get fresh energy, biblical Sabbath reminds us that God does not need us to be active every day and night. It separates us from people who cling to us and from frenzied routines we cling to for identity. When we sleep and wake up, after we Sabbath and come back to work, we can ask, "What have you been up to God? Where do I fit? Where can I join in?"

Peterson inspired Jenni and I to take regular Sabbath prayer walks. These were a mix of date, day off, recreation, reading space, prayer retreat and sightseeing. We'd started with coffee and reading. After an hour or two head off for a walk and prayer in different directions. We met back at a cafe for lunch. After lunch we walked together – one way I listened to and encouraged Jen, and on the way back Jen listened and challenged me. It was mutual spiritual direction. Those Warburton retreats were among our most refreshing times of Sabbath play and prayer:

> "There is a large, leisurely center to existence where God must be deeply pondered, lovingly believed. This demand is not for prayer-on-the-run or for prayer-on-request. It means entering realms of spirit where wonder and adoration have space to develop, where play and delight have time to flourish." (p.65)

Inspired again by Peterson and journaled memories, we have reengaged this practice for 2023 and to enjoy Sabbath with a reckless disregard for our "to do" task list.

Scripture

Peterson put his finger on my pulse that in studying Scripture for education and preaching, I have tended to listen less to God. I studied to acquire information to fill sermons and fulfill consumer-driven job-expectations rather than hear the Bible on its terms. Peterson advocates not treating the Bible as a textbook but listening to the aliveness in the Word: "Contemplative exegesis means opening our interiors to these revealing sounds and submitting our lives to the story these words tell in order to be shaped by them. This involves a poet's respect for words and a lover's responsiveness to words." (p.125)

The Ethiopian seeking to understand Scripture (Acts 8:30) needed a guide for his questions and not just an explanation. What helped him was the communal activity of listening, questioning and conversing toward faith. He did not need it summarised and abstracted. He did need help in making sense in how it connected with God and pointed to Christ. Peterson re-invites me to freshly listen deeply to God through Scripture, but also to guide others who are on a journey of spiritual search to hear the Bible's life-giving words.

Spiritual Direction

After prayer and Scripture, spiritual direction is the third angle shaping pastoral integrity. Spiritual direction is when two people agree to give attention to what God is doing in one of their lives. It reminds me to discern signs of grace everywhere and to help people see what God is doing, rather than racing in with advice or problem-solving I love to give. It is a helpful model of ministry not just for designated "spiritual direction" sessions, but for visiting, counselling, coaching and general conversations. Peterson says it helps shape the agenda of a pastor's work from the souls of people rather than the demands they voice.

I resonate with Peterson's articulated need for a spiritual director myself. It is easy to be a pastor and neglect attention to prayer, Scripture and attentiveness to what God is doing. When I rock climbed, I appreciated and relied on Patrick, my more experienced climbing mate. He helped cheer me on and keep me safe, let me set my own pace and goals but was also there to help if I got in trouble. We went together through dark wet valleys as well as high mountain peaks. Pat's hobby is climbing but his vocation is spiritual directing. In my spiritual trekking, I similarly relied on Pat and other directors to help me discern what path to take, when to push on and when to be cautious, and to see what God is unfolding. It is advantageous to have a companion who pays attention with me to my faith and prayer. My pride and self-reliance may not like it but my spiritual health and vitality depends on it. I resonate with Peterson:

> "I began to pray for someone who would guide me in the essential, formative parts of my life: my practice of prayer, my understanding of grace. I wanted someone who would take my life of prayer and pilgrimage with Christ as seriously (or more seriously) than I did, who was capable of shutting up long enough to hear the distinct uniqueness of my spirituality, and who had enough disciplined restraint not to impose an outside form on me." (pp.170-171)

Peterson brings out the best in me and my aspirations as a chaplain to adopt prayer, Scripture and spiritual direction as a "trigonometry of ministry" that helps sync my work with what God is doing. I need those angled resources for my own spirit.

I confess I have a long history of being prone to not being prayerful. I start praying and want to send off an email. I sit to listen to God and am prone to think about the project I started earlier. I preach a gospel of grace but am drawn to driven-ness. I celebrate communion but meditate on competitiveness. I am compromised. Peterson calls me to repent and invites me in more healthy prayerful directions.[8]

Hearing the Bible as what God is saying to me and allowing it to transform my ministry and my community is a task that captures my imagination also as a chaplain. I use the Bible with the people I serve less regularly as a chaplain than as a church pastor. Yet Peterson reminds me again that Scripture forms an angle to shape my soul and ministry so that I can better help others awaken to hope and beauty and meaning in the midst of their work and everyday lives.

Moreover, at my best as a chaplain I'll offer attentive awe to the person in front of me along the model of spiritual direction – not being quick to offer advice but helping them discern their path consistent with their values and to whatever extent they are open to what God is doing.

***The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction* (1989; 1993)**[9]

The Contemplative Pastor offers healthy frameworks for ministry as a pastor (or chaplain). Peterson was pastor of Christ our King Presbyterian Church for twenty-nine years and longed to be local there in Bel Air and know two or three square miles of that neighbourhood, "just know it and keep on knowing it" (p.12). He wanted to never pastor a church of more people than he could remember by name and be with them to see what God is doing and help them become all God wants for them. That vocation grabbed my imagination for congregational ministry. Defence chaplaincy with its regular relocations is different geographically, yet the call to stability expresses itself to Defence as a community to similarly "just know it and keep on knowing it" (p.12). Defence chaplaincy also spans a larger group of people than any church yet its heart is to know our people by name and to discern what God is doing among them.

To aspire to be a good pastor is not sufficient without helpful adjectives. Peterson suggestively re-defines pastoral ministry as unbusy, subversive and apocalyptic.

In a context where to be "busy" is a badge of honour and importance, Peterson counter-culturally asserts "busy" with pastor (or I add chaplain) should sound to our ears like *embezzling* to banker or *adulterous* with marriage counsellor. Peterson urges focusing on core work of prayer, the Word and listening, rather than getting caught up in a frenzy of busy work: "How can I lead people into the quiet place beside the still waters if I am in perpetual motion? How can I persuade a person to live by faith and not by works if I have to juggle my schedule constantly to make everything fit into place?" (p.19)

I appreciate the lesson of an experienced chaplain in bringing grace and calm into places of frantic and controlled chaos. This Chaplain was on exercise with a Reserve unit with whom they had previously served in several pre-chaplaincy roles. There was the need for a move of position and everyone was rushing around. The Chaplain approached the Commanding Officer (CO), who was a friend from civilian work and Infantry days, and stated that they felt that they were not being helpful as they didn't seem to have a role. The CO stated "You need to continue doing what you are doing as you are displaying calm and peace in the state of chaos and people are looking to you and it is helping them focus and not panic." The chaplain's reflection was that chaplains need to be people of God who bring peace into situations of chaos. They warned that being "unbusy" can be seen as being lazy however they should not be too busy either but always available and prepared to focus totally on the needs of the person who has walked in their door.

Among the best contributions a chaplain can give is modelling non-anxious presence. Another related contribution is an unhurried and attentive listening ear. A Chaplain should never use unbusy for any excuse of laziness. But neither should they present as too busy for a conversation. Chaplains will often (or always) feel they have more than enough tasks to attend to. But being present and available to soldiers, sailors and aviators is the people/relationship priority that Peterson's writing reminds me to prioritise over the demands of other tasks. When unit members ask me if I have been busy I sometimes tell them about Peterson's challenge to pastors to be unbusy and that although I have plenty to do each day I am never too busy to talk to them. Echoing Peterson, and contrary to common measures of success of society and even expectations of operational tempo, a contemplative chaplain's calling is *unbusy*.[10]

In a society where a pastor's role and religion are marginalised to the private domestic sphere, Peterson claims pastoral ministry is also *subversive* in upending the status quo and pointing to another world. It is easy for pastors to feel important when invited to be a chaplain to the culture or to trade in religious goods and services. But with prayer and parable, a pastor frames the world and church differently:

> "If we can develop a sense that sacrificial love, justice, and hope are at the core of our identities – they go to our jobs with us each day, to our families each night - then we are in fact subversive. You have to understand that Christian subversion is nothing flashy. Subversives don't win battles. All they do is prepare the ground and change the mood just a little bit toward belief and hope, so that when Christ appears, there are people waiting for him." (p.12)

Chaplains never exercise command, yet their influence is significant and subversive in pointing to the importance of peace, welfare, wellbeing and ethics – things that are important in Defence but that can be forgotten if the organisation is not careful. A chaplain's calling is *subversive*.

In a time when churchgoers want pastors who can do God's work for them, fix them up, help them bypass difficult paths and tell them want to do, Peterson finds focus with St John's Apocalypse. He urges openness to God in prayer, "making a live connection between the place we find ourselves and the God who is finding us" (pp.42-43), like John in Revelation (1:9-10, 22:20). He suggests pastors rediscover the creative speech of poetry, which is hard work but conducive to powerful communication. And he urges apocalyptic patience, persisting in Kingdom work for however long it takes, despite the mess and mystery of life:

> "Impatience, the refusal to *endure*, is to pastoral character what strip mining is to the land – a greedy rape of what can be gotten at the least cost, and then abandonment in search of another place to loot. Something like fidelity comes out of apocalyptic: fidelity to God, to be sure, but also to people, to parish – to *place*." (p.49)

Peterson urges me to think about how to use stories and poetry to inspire soldiers to contemplate the deeper and broader meaning of their work and life in whatever place they find themselves. Fidelity to place is challenging given mobility and transience of postings yet is an appropriate call to the place and people with whom I serve at this time. Moreover, despite moving around, a chaplain's calling is to serve our Defence community with a calling that is *apocalyptic* – connecting to that which is beyond us.

Peterson outlines frameworks for the pastoral task between Sundays, "practicing the art of prayer in the midst of the traffic", including:

- The forgotten art of "curing souls" and helping people cultivate prayer in the midst of everyday life, as opposed to "running a church".
- Praying with eyes open and appreciating nature and literature as nourishment for the praying imagination.
- Celebrating the "ministry of small talk" and being attentive to the down-to-earth texture of life.
- Seeing people as fellow sinners to share grief and shortcomings with.
- To stay refreshed and in touch with God's word and presence and to avoid co-dependence with a congregation through taking a sabbatical.

Peterson's church-focused context is a world away from chaplaincy in one sense, yet in another sense relating faith to work and everyday life is the same paradigm as chaplaincy. Chaplains do not as regularly distribute sacraments or preach the Word, but at our best we are engaged in the art

of “curing souls”. The challenge of focusing on people and their character and sense of meaning, rather than administration in the office, is a chaplain’s parallel challenge to Peterson’s not getting caught up in “running the church”.

Peterson loved God, prayer, pastors and the church. He urged pastors to do their best and to look for the best in a congregation. He drives this point home quoting Bonhoeffer: “A pastor should not complain about his congregation, certainly never to other people, but also not to God. A congregation has not been entrusted to him in order that he should become its accuser before God and men” (p.120). That resonates also with me as a chaplain not to complain about the disappointments or foibles of Defence colleagues but to view them with hope-filled eyes, albeit as fellow sinners to share grief, pain and failure with as sell as grace.

Through my years of congregational pastoring and now as a chaplain, I aspire to be “contemplative” without limiting that term to withdrawal and quiet prayer. Contemplative is a posture that engages deeply with God and fully with the world in order to help bring the world more into sync with God’s dream for it. The contemplative Chaplain will welcome the invitation to be unbusy, subversive and apocalyptic; and help people pray in the midst of the traffic of everyday life.

The Contemplative Pastor is my favourite book on pastoral ministry, but the next two books are also favourites: *Under the Unpredictable Plant* is a favourite book on vocation, and *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places* is my favourite book on everyday spirituality.

***Under the Unpredictable Plant: An Exploration in Vocational Holiness* (1992)**[11]

Under the Unpredictable Plant charts the subversive story of Jonah and how pastors develop spirituality adequate for their calling. Peterson begins describing a pastoral crisis when he was 30 and encountered a chasm between his faith and his vocation; his life as a Christian and as a pastor. In similar circumstances, many let go of their faith or vocation. Peterson determined to hang on to both. He did not want to merely hold on to his religious job but retain the integrity of his calling as a pastor.

Buying passage to Tarshish

When Jonah is called to Ninevah, he responds by going – but towards Tarshish. Tarshish or any glamorous ministry can be a lie that draws pastors away from their calling. Pastoral work is not an idealised exotic role but more like farming full of modest daily routines.

Peterson was tempted to leave the church he served several times. But early in his ministry he had committed to stability, inspired by the Benedictine vow. At a time when monks were free to go from monastery to monastery, seeking the best feed, Benedict expected monks to commit to finding God in one place and working through any challenges there.

When I told my partner Jen about this Benedictine vow of stability, after moving with me 18 times through 8 different churches, she responded: “Where do we sign?” As someone who often looks forward to the next challenge, stability is a countercultural discipline. I have often, like Jonah and Peterson, gone to the travel agent in Joppa looking for a way out to Tarshish. I dreamt of expressing my vocation by teaching eager theological students, leading retreats for workers passionate for renewal, or sharing life with an intentional radical discipleship community. But the door regularly closed and I was reminded of my call to pastor locally. I headed to Ninevah, although not for want of checking out Tarshish.

Escaping the storm

I have had wake-up calls to remind me of my call. One was when opportunities for service in Asia closed off, and I learned to love God independent of ministry and love my family apart from their capacity to follow me to the ends of the earth. “Wake up Daz!” Another was when my daughters said: “Come and play. You are always on the computer.” Wake up O sleeper! Religious boats offer much to a pastor’s ego and activity. But they do not make for maturity or fulfil our essential calling. There comes a time to ask for a shove off, or else gather up the courage and jump ship.

Peterson once told his leaders he wanted to quit. He and his family were worn out by him “running the church”. A leader wisely asked him, “what do you want to do?” He said he wanted to focus on God and people:

> “I want to study God’s word long and carefully so that when I stand before you and preach and teach I will be accurate. I want to pray, slowly and lovingly, so that my relation with God will be inward and honest. And I want to be with you, often and leisurely, so that we can recognize each other as close companions on the way of the cross and be available for counsel and encouragement to each other.” (p.39)

The leaders told him, “Do that, and we’ll run the church.” It was a turning point for repudiating Tarshish religious careerism and recovering his vocational holiness.

Similarly, storms and deep times “in the belly of the fish” leading to vocational recovery remind me of my calling, which as a chaplain is not to congregation or geographical stability, but to fidelity and attentiveness to people in our Defence community.

Finding the road to Ninevah

Peterson started an academic career but needing a second job worked in a church alongside a pastor he respected. It was a vocational turning point as he experienced pastoring as where the action was. He realised pastoral work takes seriously where people are located. Jonah had to embrace the locale of Ninevah, and Peterson similarly aspired to exegete not just Scripture but people’s lives by listening and paying careful attention. Visitation in homes, workplaces, barracks and health centres is not just a duty but research into people’s stories. Peterson asserts pastoral work is geographic but also eschatological. It listens for what God is doing locally but also opposes what ignores God and points toward an alternative future.

Quarrelling with God under the unpredictable plant

The story ends with Jonah quarrelling with God outside Ninevah. Anger is a helpful sign something is wrong, either inside or outside our self. For Jonah it was inside. His lack of imagination could not allow for God’s plan being greater than his own ego. He could not envision God’s grace and hospitality extending to the Ninevites after he preached judgement.

One of Peterson’s vocational mentors in Fyodor Dostoevsky; from him he learned the poverty of an inadequate model of ministry. The pastor’s role is to say “God” into situations. It is not about meeting needs. It is oriented to service rather than career. It sees God in people rather than seeing people for how they can help the pastor’s ego. It treats people with dignity rather than seeing them as problems to solve.

The book of Jonah ends in Ninevah but with an uncertain ending about how the prophet Jonah responds. Will he rise to the dignity of a spiritual companion to the people of the city, or revert to something less? Peterson says vocational holiness for a pastor is to clarify what a pastor is and then

cultivate a spirituality adequate to support that. I find myself identifying with the bankruptcy and hope-for-renewal of Peterson and Jonah.

I thought that in moving from Reserve chaplaincy to full-time I would have much more time in this new Ninevah for people and spirituality. The reality is that there is much administration and courses, busy demands and preoccupying projects that mean days and months go quicker than ever. A senior chaplain visited us at Simpson Barracks and the most helpful part of his visit was his reminder of what the core of chaplaincy is about – that is helping soldiers connect with matters of meaning and the spirit. Chaplains may take an interest in other avenues, but we do other tasks to help people connect to deeper values. Peterson underlines that important guidance in urging me to prioritise the visiting and engaging with people locally in the place I am planted (using Peterson's language), or the unit where I am posted (Defence language). As a foundation, Peterson reminds me to prioritise my spiritual practices, including morning prayer, community worship and everyday spirituality.

As a chaplain most of the people I support are not Christian or even religious. Yet my worldview that God is engaged in the world and invites people to cooperate in fostering a world of peace and justice informs how I support people. I am conscious of the wonder of how people are different in what drives them and how they are gifted to make their best contributions to make the world a better place. Moreover, even for those who are not people of faith, most are open to enjoying and learning from nature, are conscious of history, and acknowledge their need for the community of their families and teams.

That is part of how chaplaincy is uniquely fit for purpose for Defence – not because the religious worldview of chaplains is the same as all our people, but because our pastoral theology is an asset to help bring out the best values-based engagement from all our members.

I have loved reading Peterson over the years. He has been an inspiration as a long-serving God-attentive and people-focused pastor, deeply reflective writer and a grounded scholar. He is highly counter-cultural both to contemporary society and contemporary expressions of church life and its tendency towards managerial/ programmatic leadership. I revisited Peterson again to glean fresh inspiration for "fit for purpose" ministry and leadership as a contemplative Chaplain.

Endnotes

1. Richard Rohr, *The Naked Now: Learning to See How the Mystics See* (New York: Crossroad, 2009), 180.
2. Thomas Merton, *Contemplative Prayer* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1969), 23.
3. Previously discussed in Darren Cronshaw, *Dangerous Prayer: Discovering a Missional Spirituality in the Lord's Prayer* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2017), 11-17.
4. Eugene H. Peterson, *Like Dew Your Youth: Growing Up with Your Teenager* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994 [1976]); *The Message: The Bible in Contemporary Language* (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 2002); *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places: A Conversation in Spiritual Theology*, Book 1 in the Spiritual Theology series (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2005); *Eat This Word: A Conversation in the Art of Spiritual Reading*, Book 2 in the Spiritual Theology series (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 2006); *The Pastor: A Memoir* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2011).
5. Eugene H Peterson, *Five Smooth Stones for Pastoral Work* (Grand Rapids Eerdmans, 1992 [previously John Knox 1980]); drawing on review originally published on John Mark Ministries website (9 July 2009), http://www.jmm.org.au/articles/22716.htm
6. Eugene H Peterson, *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity* (Grand Rapids Eerdmans, 1993; previously 1987)
7. See also Eugene Peterson, *Answering God: The Psalms as tools for prayer* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1989)
8. Inspired also by Peterson, *Christ Plays in Ten Thousand Places*; and review originally published in John Mark Ministries (Sep 16, 2010), https://www.jmm.org.au/articles/24945.htm; and EA's *Faith and Life* (November 2010).
9. Eugene H Peterson, *The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction* (Grand Rapids Eerdmans, 1993; previously The Leadership Library, vol. 17. Christianity Today/Word, 1989); drawing on review originally published on John Mark Ministries website (30 March 2010), http://www.jmm.org.au/articles/23390.htm.
10. See also an excellent book for which Peterson wrote the Foreword: Robert Fryling, *The Leadership Ellipse: Shaping how we lead by who we are* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2009); reviewed in *Witness: The Voice of Victorian Baptists*, Vol.90, No.10 (December 2010), 22; https://www.buv.com.au/book-reviews/the-leadership-ellipse/
11. Eugene H Peterson, *Under the Unpredictable Plant: An Exploration in Vocational Holiness* (Grand Rapids Eerdmans, 1992); drawing on review originally published on John Mark Ministries website (Nov 13, 2009), http://www.jmm.org.au/articles/23068.htm.

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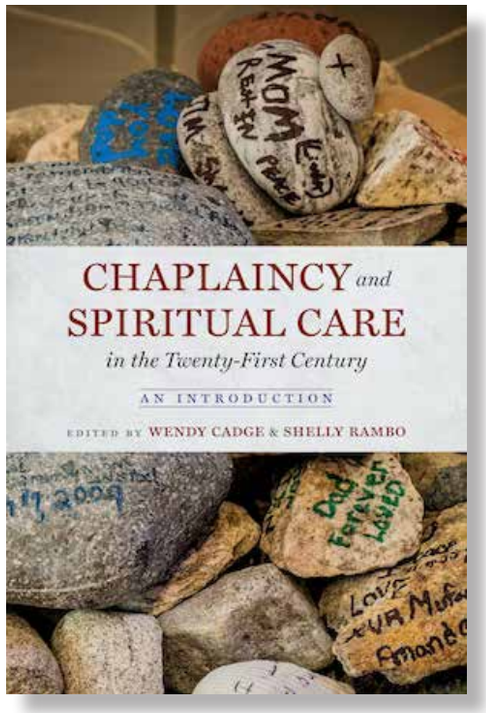
Book Review: Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care in the Twenty-First Century / An Introduction

Edited by Wendy Cadge & Shelly Rambo
Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press. 2022.
ISBN 9781469667607 (paperback) | ISBN 9781469667614 (eBook)
320pp

Reviewed by Chaplain Matt Hall

Chaplain Matt Hall is a Baptist Pastor serving at Harmony Baptist Church, Mosman Park WA, as well as teaching pastors in the role of Training Director with Asia Evangelistic Fellowship International. He is currently posted to 16 RWAR and 13 ER, Irwin Barracks, Perth, WA.



Danish physicist Niels Bohr is reported to have said, with prophetic wit, "Prediction is a very difficult art, especially when it involves the future." The work of chaplaincy is both a science and an art. To predict the future of chaplaincy would have been difficult at the onset of the twenty-first century as it is now reimagined in a changing religious landscape. The increasing focus on evidence-based understandings as well as diverse demographics and contexts challenges the history of chaplaincy even though that history is recognized for its important grounding and shaping of the field.

Chaplaincy and Spiritual Care in the Twenty-First Century includes contributions by a range of social scientists, theologians and practitioners drawing upon ongoing research. The collaborative text utilising important competencies for all chaplains; meaning making, interpersonal and organisational, aims to explore and name what chaplaincy does as it addresses contemporary issues. This shift from explorations of what chaplains are to what they do will entice the reader to delve into the stirring discussions, reflection questions, case studies, resources, and developments. The book positions intersectional issues of religious diversity, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and other markers of identity as central to the future of chaplaincy as a profession. This is coupled with the research informed, evolving education for effective chaplaincy training as the volume was written with the intention of being a teaching tool building skills and competencies.

Relevant to defence chaplaincy, the book forecasts that chaplains in the twenty-first century need to be able to facilitate practices of meaning making and to navigate worldviews. Chaplains need to be conversant in texts and rituals that bring meaning in pluralistic settings. The book stresses that when chaplains are invited to respond to crisis and change with people in life transitions, a stance

of humility and not-knowing can be a strength. A curiosity about the careseeker's understanding when exploring meaning, asking questions, and assisting in naming the variety of emotions and struggles places the careseeker in the position of expert about their experiences rather "than [a partiality] to shape them toward the values and visions a chaplain adopts (98)." Under the heading Capacities for Spiritual Reflection, there is a liberating effect by admitting that "[w]e simply cannot know everything about how the sacred behaves, manifests, or influences others (102)." Chaplains attending to their own spiritual, religious, and theological reflection on a regular basis helps to lead and facilitate spiritual reflexivity; the practice of examining thoughts, reactions, and behaviours.

Consistent with meaning making competencies, some of the interpersonal competency reflection questions include self-reflexivity to identify further training gaps. A notable research finding, consistent across a range of therapeutic approaches, is that the stronger an alliance between therapist and careseeker the more likely clinical treatment will have positive outcomes. Although there is no research on spiritual care alliances, the research suggests that a chaplain-careseeker alliance is equally important. Spiritual care helps people experience spiritual trust.

Defence chaplains will be all too familiar with the book's part on working in complex organisations that have reporting systems, bureaucratic processes, structures and ways of knowing that are reflective of the mission of the organisation. Defence chaplains will resonate with the concept of serving not only careseekers but also the staff of the organisation where they work. Defence chaplains are designated leaders, and in accordance with the book, grow their organisational skills in team building and partnership, negotiation, conflict mediation, ethical reasoning, practices of restorative justice, and counsel on moral matters. Effective chaplains work deliberately to see the flourishing interdependence of the individual and the organisation. At the same time holding in tension " the dialectic of an organisation's potential for change and its resistance to change (194)." Chapter 9, 'Facilitating Resilience: Chaplaincy as a Catalyst for Organizational Well-Being' by Rev. Dr. Nathan H. White who oversees professional development for US Army chaplains, will be of particular interest especially on the subject of organisational resilience. White argues that chaplains should extend beyond one-on-one interaction for chaplaincy to effect organisational change. Key questions arise, "how might training for this role differ from training for primary care intervention? How can chaplains speak to issues of morality and directly affect organizational outcomes?(210)", as chaplains see organisational work as part of their responsibility.

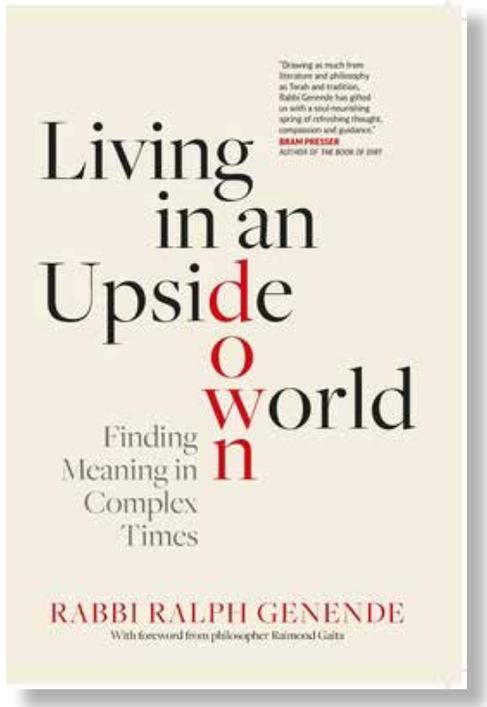
Overall, the book is a rich, expansive introduction to the nature and work of chaplains in the twenty-first century, one that should be read by new or experienced chaplains. The book argues for the importance of chaplaincy and spiritual care, and the responsibility of effective training, because of the opportunities in the present moment; Kairos. If we are dominated by a sense of Kairos, the future is a source of expectation that pours energy into the present to create public spaces to hold pain, to alter perspectives, and to infuse meaning and purpose into the ordinary and the everyday.

Book Review: Living in an Upside-Down World Finding Meaning in Complex Times

Author: Rabbi Ralph Genende
Melbourne, Australia: 2022
Retrospect
ISBN: 978-0-6455013-1-5 (Hardbook)
236pp

Reviewed by Principal Chaplain Darren Jaensch

Principal Chaplain Darren Jaensch is a Lutheran pastor serving at Holy Cross Lutheran Parish, Belconnen ACT. He is former Director General Chaplaincy – Army and currently provides Reserve support (SERCAT3) to the Office of DGCHAP-A.



Rabbi Genende is known to many readers of this Journal through his role as Jewish member on the Australian Defence Force's Religious Advisory Committee to the Services (RACS) and to others as one of Australia's most pre-eminent rabbis and community leaders. In this collection of muses he invites his readers to accompany his personal journey and "our collective journey" through some of the many crises and challenges of the 21st century. While many of the canvassed issues and perspectives of the author might be seen as particular to the Jewish world or viewed from a Jewish perspective (and they unashamedly and appropriately are), most are topical both for broader society and for other communities of faith, and Rabbi Genende's reflections portray both the authenticity of his particular faith perspective and a deep humanity and compassion that resonate with readers of other traditions. (Although, it needs to be said, the inclusion of a glossary was immensely invaluable for one outside of that tradition. Perhaps, also, some of the puns were lost to the uninitiated!)

Do not expect an academic thesis or thorough topical treatments in this book. It is reflective rather than systematic in style. The short chapters appear to be brief reflections gathered over the author's years of life as a community rabbi seeking to make sense of the world for himself and his people, yet collated in such a way as to provide a logical and meaningful meandering through the issues of life. Subsequently, there are some sections that may hold less interest for readers outside of that community of faith or for those less interested in the life and experiences of the author himself (e.g. personal travel logs, farewelling of particular personalities, specific Shule communiques). Yet the discerning miner will find, even therein, nuggets of both intellectual and pastoral gold along with cause for thought.

This reviewer was enriched in four significant ways by the reading of this book.

Firstly, perhaps a little indulgently or even voyeuristically, I learned a great deal more about Rabbi Ralph whom I have come to respect and love as an advisor, colleague and friend through our intersection in Australian Defence Force chaplaincy and religious life. This is true for me and no doubt for the many who have likewise been blessed by crossing paths with him. It will not be for all readers.

Secondly, most significantly, the reader is invited into the Rabbi's courageous and compassionate perspectives on a number of oft controversial issues of contemporary relevance to traditional religion and, indeed, broader society: the Uluru Statement from the Heart; inclusion of LGBTIQA+ in orthodox religious communities; gender; religious conversion; asylum seekers; racism; "pernicious" polarisation; the Royal Commission into Child Sexual Abuse; Climate Crisis; Religious communities' response to COVID restrictions; and, of course, the Israel-Gaza conflict; to name a few. The author self-describes as "a representative of Modern (Jewish) Orthodoxy, with its synthesis of the traditional and the contemporary, its balance between continuity and change." Undoubtedly there is not one "Modern (Jewish) Orthodox" perspective on such matters. As one of the author's fellow Rabbis (Jeffrey Cohen) has noted, on a number of issues that the author raises there would be many on the left and the right who take issue with his views. Of course, that often suggests that one is on target! I certainly found much resonance with the author's predominantly moderate and compassionate approach to many of these thorny topics. On several occasions, what I heard in this rabbi's words seemed to reflect the grace (love) and beneficence that Christians (such as myself) ascribe to that famous Rabbi from Nazareth, in stark contrast to what I oft hear in my own Christian tradition (and, indeed militant non-theism) which at times sounds more like the heartless legalism that many of my own are quick to stereotypically ascribe to Judaism. Not all will hear the same. Irrespective of the reader's own reception, Rabbi Genende's offerings are not proscriptive. Rather, they bring the richness of Jewish tradition, English literature, history, psychology and philosophy to bear, and invite the reader (regardless of perspective, faith, philosophy or political persuasion) to think, to engage with the matters at hand and to raise one's own consciousness. Always with an invitation and challenge for a better future.

A third, almost incidental enrichment came as a result of the reflective nature of the individual muses (chapters) – even homiletical or devotional. As the author journeys with his community through the seasons of religious life and the human experience of death and loss, crises and ailments, human imperfection, he offers pastoral perspective and spiritual insight that, whilst deeply faithful to his own religious tradition, resonates beyond that tradition and, in so doing, provides a resource for preaching and reflection for those of his own tradition and others.

Fourthly, I discerned a glimmer of honest, non-utopian hope (perhaps even inspiration) for some common understanding, respect, even peace between those siblings of the major monotheistic faiths. This was apparent in the author's struggle through interfaith engagement and in a moving recounting of an interfaith journey to Jerusalem. The later suggested that "the solution – or at least part of it – will be found not in politics but in religion, in the genuine seekers of faith in each of our magnificent monotheistic movements." A perhaps lofty, but noble, aspiration.

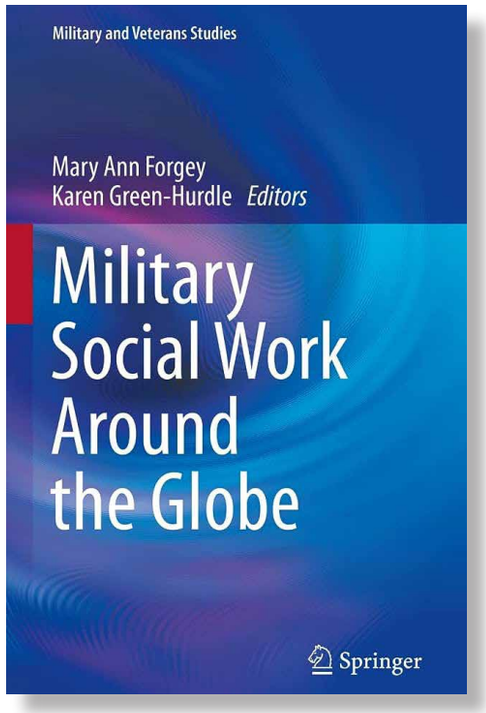
The publisher's blurb on the back cover suggests: "thought provoking and humane, this a collection for anyone – believer or atheist – in need of meaning in a complex, turbulent time." The atheist may struggle with much of the intrinsically theistic world-view. Believers of many persuasions less so. But all who journey with Rabbi Genende in this volume will find much to ponder.

Book Review: Military Social Work Around the Globe

Editors: Mary Ann Forgey and Karen Green-Hurdle
Springer; 1st ed. 2023 edition (15 Nov 22)
Language: English
ISBN-10: 3031144813
ISBN-13: 9783031144820
314pp

Reviewed by Chaplain Karen Haynes

Chaplain Karen Haynes is a Lead Air Force Chaplain, currently serving at 13 Squadron RAAF Base Darwin. She is a Queensland Baptist minister and previously focussed on young adults ministry before joining the Air Force.



"Military Social Work Around the Globe", published by Springer, is a comprehensive overview of the history and current practice of military social work in fourteen countries. The consistent and concise writing of each chapter make the book easy to follow. The book is well edited by US Military Social Worker Mary Ann Forgey and Australian Open Arms Social Worker, Karen Green-Hurdle. Three key themes, the applications to chaplaincy and the best readership for the book will be explored in this review.

From an Australian perspective, the clinical nature of Social Work in some of the countries surveyed was striking. For instance, in the Netherlands, it is social workers who run decompression programs for post-deployment units and undertake the three-month post-deployment interview. This is work Australians would recognise from psychologists rather than social workers. Likewise, in the United States, social workers are in hospital and corrections settings undertaking screenings and assessments. This clinical focus has come out of a history of practically focused care by untrained Red Cross or similar workers, but located within the medical system. This contrasts radically from countries like Australia and South Africa, where social workers study tertiary qualifications, but are not required to be registered, developed or monitored by a professional body. The book helps reader appreciate that Social Work is executed differently across national settings, usually leaning towards a mental health or a practical care emphasis.

In countries with conscription, there was a strong emphasis on supporting young adults at their unique stage of development alongside their initial service in the military. Israel, Finland and Denmark

all have conscription for young people into the military with women included compulsorily in Israel and optionally in Finland and Denmark. Their social work practice in response is highly geared to supporting young people in the brief but critically full-time compulsory service and a healthy transition back to a Ready Reserve status. This emphasis on the unique needs of young adults contrasts strongly with a country like Australia, which has a young military force, but where the social work is generally focused on the concerns of members with nuclear families. While professional development of helping professions is generally dominated by North-American research, the countries that have invested in military social work with young people may have more to teach to countries like Australia with recruitment and retention challenges.

What is particularly striking about the organization of military social work, is the variety of approaches. Ranging from stand alone, to medical, to human-performance based locus, each country had a different approach to organizing what could be a uniformed, civilian or blended capability. Those countries with social work beginning closer to WWII were most likely to be medically aligned, while more recently stood up capabilities were more likely to be located in a proactive or holistic model of health, ethical and resilience programs. These unique organisational constructs were explained by the combination of history and civilian environments that had a very low awareness of military social work, leading to little guidance from outside the military.

Chaplains reading the text will be particularly interested in the role of multi-disciplinary practice in various national settings. The editors note the role of chaplains in the Irish context of lobbying for the introduction of a social work capability into the Irish military in the 1980s (Forgey & Green-Hurdle, 2023). The Finnish, Israeli and United States applications all speak to the role of multi-disciplinary practice in supporting members and families. Most countries acknowledge the befits of multi-disciplinary practice, while still only deploying it in niche settings.

Forgey and Green-Hurdle have created an academic work out of the burst of information sharing of the COVID-19 pandemic. The book could be helpful to numerous military readers including those in military helping, human performance and medical fields. The variety of organizational approaches spur ideas for the reader on how to best work with a nation's traditions of care and apply them to the support and growth of military members and their families.

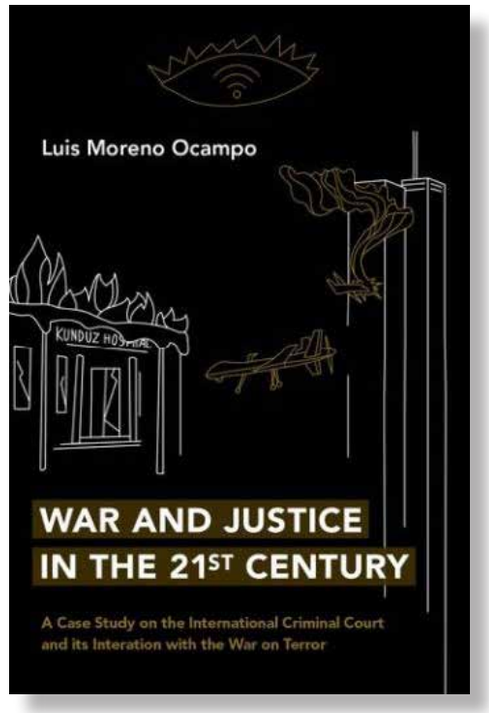
Book Review: War and Justice in the 21st Century

A Case study on the International Criminal Court and its Interaction with the War on Terror

Author: Luis Moreno Ocampo,
Oxford University Press, New York, United States of America 2022
ISBN: 9780197628973
DOI: 10.1093/oso/978097628973.001.0001
622 Pages

Reviewed by Chaplain Charles Vesely

Chaplain Charles Vesely is a Minister of the Uniting Church in Australia and an Army Chaplain. CHAP Vesely's present role is the Director, Chaplaincy - Joint Training, at the Australian Defence College, in Canberra.



Some may consider this tome rather strange reading fare for chaplains. One may even open the cover and be captured by the feeling that this book is an esoteric pleasure for *'black letter lawyers*[1]*'* would who find such a subject exciting. On such points, however, the reading of this book, nothing could be further from the truth. If one considers that military chaplains have an important role in the monitoring of the humanitarian aspects of both warlike, non-warlike and other operations. Further, military chaplains hold a very real role of advising command on matters of ethics, culture, and religion. Ocampo's book is quickly revealed as a valuable read and resource for any military chaplain.

The author, Luis Moreno Ocampo (b. 1952), is an Argentine lawyer who served as the founding Chief Prosecutor (CP) of the International Criminal Court (ICC) from 2003 to 2012. Prior to serving as CP of the ICC, Ocampo served as a prosecutor of the crimes committed by Argentina's Military dictatorship which ruled Argentina from 1976-1983 with horrendous method. Ocampo's experience as prosecutor in his homeland following the horrific crimes of the military dictatorship well prepared Ocampo for his role as the CP of the ICC. Broader, the experience gave Ocampo the insights to make a valuable contribution to the international justice system. One would hope that Ocampo's work as the ICC CP leaves a legacy in our modern world of justice which ideally will also lead to a world that promotes safety and security for all humankind.

War and Justice in the 21st Century is a very well written and easy to read record of the various war crime tribunals starting from the Nuremburg War Crime Tribunal set up after World War II, through to the foundation of the ICC. Ocampo's account of the establishment of the Nuremburg War Crime Tribunal, the various other war crime tribunals covering, more recent events, to the

final establishment of the ICC under the Rome Statue[2] gives the reader a good understanding of how these tribunals came into existence and the complexities of the *Jus in Bello* construct. Ocampo's explanation of the historic war crimes tribunals takes the reader on the journey to reach the destination of modern war crimes prosecution and the difficulties at times it took to reach the level of maturity that now exists. From this awareness the reader gains the important appreciation that the international criminal law has complexities and many stakeholders but through all of this *Justicia*[3] must prevail.

Ocampo's writing style is very accessible to the non-lawyer, indeed his style is very accessible to the common person who is interested in history and justice. The reader gains an important insight into Ocampo's driving values from the very beginning which are evident throughout the book. Early in the book Ocampo chooses the following quote from Former President of South Africa the late Nelson Mandela:

> *"The challenge for the modern Prosecutor is to become a lawyer for the people. It is your duty to build an effective relationship with the community and to ensure that the rights of the victims are protected. It is your duty to prosecute fairly and effectively according with the rule of law and to act in a principled way without fear, favour, or prejudice. It is your duty to build a prosecution service that is an effective deterrence to crime and is known to demonstrate great compassion and sensitivity to the people it serves.*[4]*"*

As the reader travels through Ocampo's chronicled story of the ICC, its foundation, and the case details, shared, the reader finds those Mandela words gently blowing zephyr-like throughout the pages.

Australian Defence Force chaplains will be very familiar with the terms *Jus ad Bellum* and *Jus in Bello*. The Defence Force Chaplains College as a component school of the Australian Defence College, located in Canberra, carefully instructs new to service chaplains in this area.[5] Ocampo introduces his readers to the term *Jus ad Curiam* (justice by the court), he [Ocampo] then draws a nexus between the two concepts that Jus ad Curiam naturally flows out of the just war and laws of war theories. The learning of this construct by chaplains gives chaplains a better and deeper understanding of the Laws of Armed Conflict (LOAC) and International Humanitarian Law (IHL). The Jus ad Curiam concept serves as an effective reminder that there are well established safeguards for human rights and social justice of which the military chaplain must always be a strong advocate.

One important point that Ocampo points out to his readership is the change in the understanding and attitude to terrorism and acts of war. The war on terror commenced within a very short period of the September 11, 2002, attacks in the United States of America. Prior to 9/11, terrorism was viewed by the US government as a law enforcement problem[6]. Ocampo explains that the Bush administration deemed the attacks as acts of war, thus following a differing convention from that of domestic law enforcement. The reader will gain from Ocampo's careful analysis how the construct has changed since 9/11 and the various tensions that this understanding has built domestically for nations and in international relations. Ocampo sets his readership up well for understanding this different construct, and to serve in this now different view. The chaplain reader will be able to take this learning and understanding to better appreciate the complexities faced by governments, diplomats, military commanders, faith group leaders, and the ordinary people upon whose ground conflicts may commence and be prosecuted by forces from outside and/or within.

Present day military chaplains live and work in a complex and troubled world. Many theological, ethical, and legal, boundaries bring the chaplain and those whom they serve to at times a point of 'an abyss.' Ocampo's book enables a 'conversation' and thinking to bring the chaplain to gain some insight and wisdom to take into the mix of troubled and confused situations in which the chaplain has a key role to serve.

Endnotes

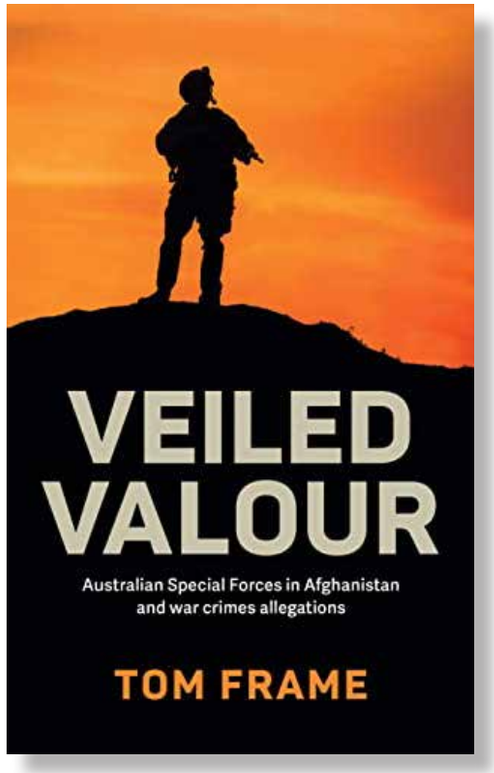
1. The term *'Black Letter Lawyer'* is common parlance in legal circles for lawyers whose whole lives are heavily focused upon the law.
2. 17 July 1998, in force on 1 July 2002, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 2187, No. 38544, Depositary: Secretary-General of the United Nations, http://treaties.un.org.
3. Justicia, (Greek, 'Themis') the Roman Goddess of Justice and Law is seen as the virtue of goodness, wisdom, and righteousness.
4. The late former President of South Africa, Nelson Mandela, speech when receiving the Medal of Honour from the International Association of Prosecutors, August 31, 2000. Op Cit: Preface ix/xxi
5. See: Australian Defence Force Supporting Chaplaincy Course, Part 3, *DEF53415 Diploma of Institutional and Operational Chaplaincy.*
6. Op cit p. xvii: Goldsmith, J., *The Terror Presidency: Law and Judgement inside the Bush Administration*, Kindle ed. 2007, p 103

Book Review: Veiled Valour:
Australian Special Forces in Afghanistan and war crimes allegations

Author: Tom Frame
Sydney: UNSW Press, 2022
ASIN: B09ZXNXKCL
ISBN: 9781742237633
456pp

Reviewed by Chaplain Darren Cronshaw

Chaplain Darren Cronshaw is a Baptist pastor currently serving at Defence Force School of Signals.



On 19 November 2020 I gathered at 1100h with other staff and trainees at Army School of Transport, as did other units all around Australia, to watch the Chief of the Defence Force General Angus Campbell announce the Brereton Report of alleged war crimes by Australian Special Forces in Afghanistan. The first trainee who wanted to debrief afterwards remarked, “That is not the Army I joined. I would not have believed Australian soldiers could do those things.” She understood the Australian Defence Force (ADF) was highly respected by the Australian public and that acknowledging murder of civilians, torture and mistreatment of detainees and other atrocities turned a new page in history. She was starting to digest how and why that happened, and what it meant for ADF moving forward?

Given these are questions most of us in ADF are asking, Veiled Valour is timely for its background insights. The author Thomas Robert Frame AM is an Australian academic and formerly an Australian Naval Officer (1979-1992) and Anglican Bishop to the ADF (2001-2007). His focus is not the Inquiry’s findings but the political and military contexts of the events it uncovered, and the media and consultant reports and Brereton investigation that uncovered them.

Part 1 explores the context of Afghanistan’s modern history including the Soviet Union’s decade-long occupation and widespread and shameful violations of human rights, and the subsequent civil war and rise of the Taliban and its oppressive religious extremism. The intractable conflict and morally degrading context of counterinsurgency increased the possibility of breaches of humanitarian law.

Part 2 discusses the evolution of Australia’s Special Forces since 1957 and their deployment in Afghanistan between 2001 and 2013, and the changing shape of the Taliban and the human terrain of Uruzgan province where Australians were based. Frame notes the Special Air Service (SAS) has always recruited humility over hubris, bravery over bravado, and stressed the importance of good character and not going “rogue”. They have had to be careful not to see themselves as elite soldiers exempt from rules that apply to broader Army, especially given the sensitive nature of their missions. They have proven themselves in many conflicts, including navigating difficult ethical dilemmas in Vietnam and East Timor.

The overwhelming majority of Defence members including Special Forces are good people of the highest integrity who conscientiously navigate ethical dilemmas. Yet in Afghanistan the SAS faced a perfect storm of situational stressors:

“The conditions under which the anti-Taliban insurgency would be fought were the most complicated, and the most constricting, ever faced by Australian uniformed personnel on deployment, including the war in South Vietnam. With one side enveloped by an intricate web of rules and regulations and the other bound by none, the possibility, if not the probability, of the law being violated and ethical principles being ignored had never been greater.” (p.164)

The ADF was already stretched by deployments in East Timor and PNG, Iraq and Solomon Islands. There were differences of opinion between Cabinet and ADF leaders on what forces were needed in Afghanistan. Those deployed were sent with some ethical training but not fully aware of the ethically challenging context. The Taliban did not wear uniform, had no front lines, used homes as staging posts and recruited locals with fear and money. Troops felt Rules of Engagement were inadequate, grew annoyed with the “catch and release” policy, and were angry the enemy did not hold to humanitarian law. Improvised explosive devices (IEDs) and insider “green-on-blue” attacks occurred leading to distrust and resentment. The task of rebuilding a functioning post-Soviet and post-Taliban State was huge and yet the mission seemed more about supporting the Americans than other clear goals. And Special Forces became the troops of choice of the Australian government and their operational tempo and fatigue only increased, stretched by multiple rotations.

Part 3 unveils the drama of rumours of alleged misconduct that emerged since 2013 from media reports and including official reports by sociologist Samantha Crompvoets in 2016, former Intelligence head David Irvine in 2018 and 2020, and then the process of the formal IGADF inquiry. Crompvoets and Irvine had identified Unacceptable Behaviour, exceptionalism, dysfunctional culture, alcohol abuse, a distorted ‘warrior culture’, mateship being elevated over leadership, and a fraught relationship between SAS and Commando Regiments. They also hinted at stories of war crimes, and the media began reporting specific incidences.

Part 4 identifies comparative experiences in the New Zealand, United Kingdom, Canadian and French armed forces – the legal and ethical dilemmas they faced, how they responded, and the political and public responses in their home countries. Frame begins to identify lessons Australia could learn from Canada about ethical training after their Somalia scandal, the French determination to avoid repeats of Algeria, what New Zealand has learned about navigating the political-military interface, and the UK “human factors analysis” and training recommendations following Sergeant Blackman killing a wounded Taliban insurgent, recorded as saying: “Obviously this doesn’t go anywhere, fellas, I just broke the Geneva Convention” (p.321).

Part 5 examines the process of the IGADF report and the need to ask deep questions about the war crimes it identifies – not “heat of battle” incidents but atrocities unbecoming of Australian soldiers. Frame introduced the book with the surprise many felt about the atrocities, given the high regard Australia has for its military: “Larrikins yes, murderers no” (p.2). He concludes with the sad recognition, “The reputation of the Aussie ‘digger’ for valour had been veiled” (p413).

Strengths of the book are, on the one hand, the empathy Frame expresses for how the SAS has been challenged, but on the other hand identifying where misconduct has to be faced and culture change and further training is needed. With reference to implications for preparation and training of forces especially for counterinsurgency operations and other operations that present “wicked” problems, in many ways the book asks more questions than it answers. It concludes at a point in history a day before the Brereton report’s public release. In that sense it leaves analysis of the report’s details and actioning necessary recommendations to those responsible for recruiting, training, and leading the next generation of Australian Special Forces. Veiled Valour is invaluable reading for those troops and those responsible for leading and supporting them.

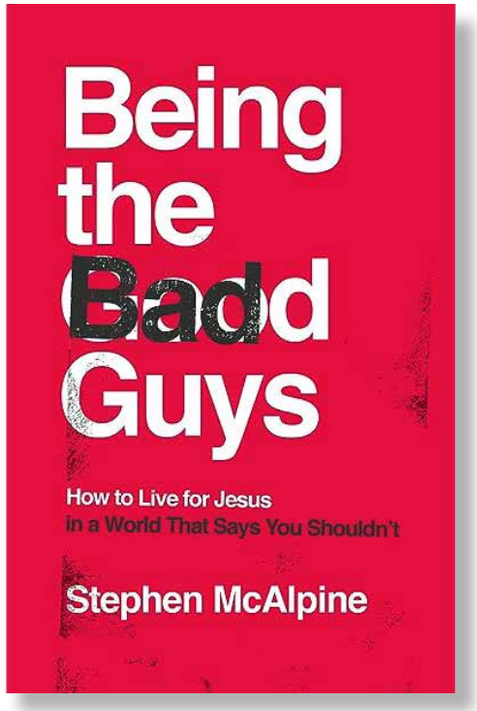
Book Review: Being the Bad Guys

How to Live for Jesus in a World That says You Shouldn’t

Author: Stephen McAlpine
The Good Book Company 2021
ISBN-10: 1784985988
ISBN-13: 978-1784985981
144pp

Reviewed by Chaplain John Dansie

Chaplain John Dansie is Regional Support Chaplain at Headquarters Forces Command, Townsville.



The world is changing rapidly in a lot of different areas. Part of this change is in relation to how people view religion and in particular Christianity. Stephen McAlpine, an Australian Pastor and Author has spent some time reflecting on the current culture the intersection between the Christian faith and that culture. In his recent book Being the Bad Guys How to Live for Jesus in a World That Says You Shouldn’t, McAlpine begins by describing how society came to view the church as the bad guy. Then he discusses three ways in which he believes we are seen as bad guys and finally he offers three suggestions for how Christians can be the best bad guys

In part one McAlpine gives a quick synopsis of his understanding about how Christianity went from being at least begrudgingly good to being seen as toxic. He explains that society wants to “replicate the kingdom vision of the good life- a future world of human rights, dignity, freedom, love and equality - but all without Jesus at the centre.” (p19) and that without Jesus as King the individual has usurped the throne. McAlpine goes on to demonstrate how this process has been sped up by the availability of social media and other technology platforms. Alongside this rise of individualism, McAlpine demonstrates how the church has misread data on trends and appears to this new group to be stealing joy and curtailing freedoms by upholding traditional values.

In part two the author discusses three areas in which Christians look like the Bad Guys. These are in the area of gender diversity, whether we see ourselves as the victim or perpetrator and self-denial versus self-actualisation. In these chapters McAlpine explores both sides of the issues and comes

to the conclusion that Christianity is moving from a place of centrality in culture to a place on the margins. In the final chapter of part two McAlpine discusses the idea of the authentic self and contrasts it with self-denial.

In part three McAlpine offers three scenarios which he sees unfolding in Australia, the first is a strategy for the church, the second is a strategy for the workplace and the third is a wider look at how there are effectively two cities living side by side now. Throughout each of these chapters he draws on a Biblical example to not only show that people of faith have been in similar situations before but that God has been able to work with people through these situations to continue to get his message out. For example in the third case the city and the city McAlpine draws parallels between the early church in Athens and the Greek city around it. McAlpine links this to our current situation where the church exists almost as a completely different way of life to mainstream culture.

Positives

There is a lot that I appreciated about this book. One of the highlights of the book was the way that McAlpine engaged with current cultural situations with Australian eyes. Another was the way he engaged in practical theology and thoughtful reflection to bring scriptural passages to bear in order to offer practical ways in which Christians could be the best bad guys. I also found it refreshing to read a Christian author who highlights that Australians are not being persecuted for their faith. Perhaps the best aspect of this book is regardless of whether you agree with McAlpine's points in part one and two you can still learn from how he reflects on the scripture stories in part three and apply those teachings in your life.

While there are a lot of positives to comment on there was one negative that stood out for me. I thought that McAlpine spent a little bit too much time exploring LGBTQI+ issues and the "sexular culture" and I dislike it when Christians reduce everything to these areas. Although in saying that McAlpine anticipates this objection by stating that "this book deals with sexuality a lot not because I am obsessed with it… but because the culture is." (p90)

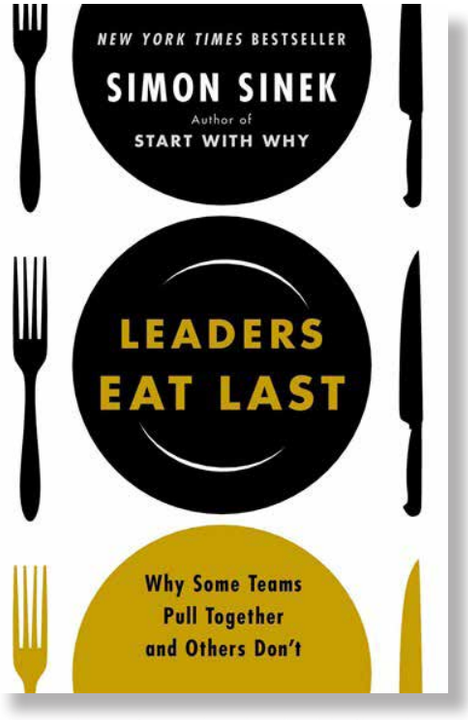
McAlpine concludes with an Afterword where he challenges Christians not to compromise their beliefs, not to form into insular holy huddles but to be the best bad guys we can in order to show the world what a humble loving Christ centred community looks like. As military chaplains -wherever we sit theologically on the issues of gender, diversity and inclusion - McAlpine's book can offer an explanation to what we see happening around us and some strategies and tactics for being the best followers of Christ that we can be in such situations.

Book Review: Leaders Eat Last:
Why Some Teams Pull Together and Others Don't

Author: Simon Sinek
Penguin Publishing Group UK 2014
ISBN: 9781591845324
368 pp

Reviewed by Chaplain Andrew Murray

Chaplain Andrew Murray is a Support Chaplain to 12/16 Hunter River Lancers GRES Depot Tamworth NSW.



When considering this year's theme, "Fit for Purpose", this book did not immediately spring to mind; it has been valuable on a number of fronts however. Leaders Eat Last author, Simon Sinek, is well known for his other titles such as Start with Why and The Infinite Game. He is well respected within business circles for his push towards better practices people management, innovation and leadership.

The book's premise is that an organisation's leadership style/culture/climate will directly affect its output, for better or worse. This is done primarily by its influence on the people within the organisation, and the way those people respond to said style/culture/climate. This is not a novel concept at all, but Sinek goes on a deep dive explaining how to achieve this in a productive and sustainable fashion, and avoid its opposite.

I engaged with this title via the audiobook version available through the Defence Library Service. Read by the author, it was a total of 9hrs listening time. The language throughout made for easy listening and engagement with the principles contained within. First published in 2017, the information contained within is relatively up-to-date and complements modern leadership theories and styles.

Sinek's chief push in this title is what he calls the "circle of safety"; that leaders must provide this circle of safety first and foremost to their followers, and that the followers will reciprocate this for their leaders. It's an idea that will allow people within a community, company, or organisation, to flourish, feel free to grow, attempt new things within calculated risk parameters, and ultimately

succeed in their goals and tasks. He goes to great lengths to explain how human biology and anthropology actually rewards a system that is focussed on caring for people, rather than meeting short-term goals at the cost of all else. By operating with this understanding, we will see long-term results and happier, healthier individuals and companies, Sinek says. He provides many examples from business, community, and military, to support his arguments and demonstrate both positive and negative examples.

Sinek does however seem to stretch his examples at times to fit his purposes. He delves into a diatribe on parenting and generational traits. Of note, his words on Attention Deficit-Hyperactivity Disorder largely ignore the genetic cause of the disorder. Similarly, he suggests that school shootings in the USA are caused by a lack of a “circle of safety”, neglecting to mention the incredible access to firearms citizens of the USA have. These leave a reader questioning how these are relevant to the points Sinek is attempting to make.

Taking in all the above, the book provides thought for how we as chaplains can continue to provide care and safety to those within our charge, driving positive organisational traits and change. Where the book falters, we can also take pause and reflect where our work has potentially gone off kilter, and re-align so as to ensure we remain fit for purpose into the future. The book was indeed worth the 9hrs it took to complete, but for a more solid read on this topic, and one that is faith based, Leading With A Limp by Dan B. Allender would be a great place to begin.

Graphic Design and Layout
CHAP Geoffrey Traill
AHQ DGCHAP-A
VIC Barracks Melbourne Vic 3000
Mobile: 0444 520 045
geoffrey.traill@defence.gov.au

Publishing Production
Hazel Dagg
Defence Publishing Service
RAAF Williams Laverton Vic 3027
Phone: (03) 9254 8675
hazel.dagg@defence.gov.au

Photograph - Back Cover:

Australian Army soldiers from 2nd Combat Engineer Regiment cleared debris on Atata Island during Operation Tonga Assist 2022.

Operation TONGA ASSIST 22 was the Australian Defence Force’s (ADF) is contribution to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)-led effort to support the Government of Tonga following the eruption of Tonga’s Hunga Tonga-Hunga Ha’apai underwater volcano on 15 January 2022 and subsequent tsunami. HMAS Adelaide arrived in the Tongan capital of Nuku’alofa on 26 January to deliver more than 250 pallets of humanitarian and disaster relief stores. Embarked ADF and Republic of Fiji’s Military Forces personnel worked side-by-side supporting clean-up efforts on the island of Atata. HMAS Supply provided more than half a million litres of fuel and humanitarian and disaster relief stores.

Photographer:LSIS David Cox
https://images.defence.gov.au/assets/Home/Search?Query=20220211ran8532497_0205.jpg&Type=Filename

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