



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS  
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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20350-2000

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Dear Colleagues:

Happy New Year!

January 15, 2002 marks the 23<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the Religious Program Specialist (RP) rating. For 23 years, RPs have made themselves indispensable partners of the Chaplain Corps in providing religious ministry to Sea Services personnel. Your superb service allows chaplains to focus more effectively on ministering to Sailors and Marines. As combatants, you provide physical security for chaplains. Chaplains' lives are in your hands.

The special nature of your duties as RPs sets you apart from most Sailors in other enlisted ratings. The typical career path for an RP requires both Navy and Marine Corps service. An RP serving with the Marines has to think like a Sailor and a Marine. This requires a significant knowledge of both services. Such knowledge is hard to come by and much of it has to be learned outside the boot camp experience.

Your challenging duties also provide a tremendous morale boost for Sea Services personnel and their family members. You operate shipboard LMRCs that connect deployed personnel to loved ones by computer and provide books, CDs, games and other enjoyable leisure activities for your crew. You give the logistical, administrative, and physical support that makes worship services, family readiness activities, and a host of other Command Religious Program initiatives possible. Without the outstanding professional efforts of RPs, morale-building events like marriage preparation programs, CREDO retreats, suicide awareness classes, and core values training, might disappear. Few ratings have such a positive affect on so many lives.

You are vital to the Navy and Marine Corps team! Your commitment and dedication are an inspiration, and I thank God for the RP rating.

On behalf of a grateful Chaplain Corps, I wish you a Happy Birthday. God Bless You!

  
WILLIAM A. PERSON, JR.  
RPCM(SW/AW/FMF), USN  
Senior Enlisted Advisor

  
BARRY C. BLACK  
RADM, CHC, USN  
Chief of Navy Chaplains