



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

IN REPLY REFER TO

1730  
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10 Apr 03

Dear Colleagues,

The Deputy Chief of Chaplains spent Tuesday morning in the hanger bay of an aircraft carrier. But this carrier was not one of those steaming in the Persian Gulf or Eastern Med. Its flight deck was full of airplanes, but none of them was streaking off a catapult to drop ordnance on targets. The planes were firmly anchored exhibits and the carrier was sitting quietly and proudly at Pier 86 in New York City. She is the INTREPID, now a floating museum. Chaplain Iasiello was aboard the INTREPID to offer prayers for a memorial service. A crowd of some 11,000 people was there with him, including many significant figures in government, the military, business and the arts.

Few of us have not thought about death in these challenging days. While we celebrate the spirit of our servicemembers who go into battle, we tremble at the risks they face in the fight. It is easy and right to think about what those who have given their lives in combat have done for us. We feel the pain their families feel as their bodies are identified and the tragic news hits home.

But the service on board the INTREPID Tuesday remembered neither sailors nor Marines. The two people whose untimely deaths drew Chaplain Iasiello to New York never went to battle. They never wore our uniforms. They never worked in our government. But they never tired of working *for* those who defend this nation against her enemies. By sheer love and commitment, they had made themselves an irreplaceable part of our military family. They were shining examples of the millions of Americans who stand behind the men and women in uniform everyday, who encourage us, support us, and pray for us, just as thousands gathered to remember them and pray for *their* family in its time of grief.

On Thursday, 4 April, a small, private plane crashed outside Boston, killing six people. Among the six were Tony and Anne Fisher. The Fisher family has been responsible for the Fisher House program, building houses at military hospitals so that the families of patients can be nearby during the days and weeks of

recovery. The Fisher family provides scholarships to military dependents. The Fisher family saved the INTREPID from the scrap heap and transformed her into the Sea-Air-Space Museum, the world's largest naval museum.

Tony and Anne Fisher loved the military community. It was a love they inherited from the older generation in the family and worked hard to pass on to the next generations of Fishers, including the five young children who survive them. Tony and Anne Fisher were tremendous fans of the military and we mourn their loss, just as we mourn the soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines we have lost in recent days. Those we have lost in battle remind us of the many more who are still putting their lives on the line for us. The loss of the Fishers should remind us, too, of the millions of Americans who pray for our young warriors everyday, who believe in them, who genuinely love them without needing any marriage bond or blood relationship to anyone in uniform.

In fact, *America* has gone to war. We've gone in the persons of our fighting forces, certainly. But we have gone as well in the hopes and prayers of those civilians from all walks of life who support our troops and their families, and anxiously await their safe return. As we remember those in harm's way today, let us remember and give thanks for all those who, like the Fishers, make the going possible and worthwhile.

Sincerely,



BARRY C. BLACK  
Rear Admiral, Chaplain Corps  
U. S. Navy  
Chief of Chaplains