



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

IN REPLY REFER TO
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Ser N097/01310
6 Nov 2001

Dear Colleagues,

Each year, as November 28th approaches, Navy chaplains and their friends around the world celebrate the history of the United States Navy Chaplain Corps. As we approach our 226th birthday, I am proud that I can say, "This year, you *made* history!"

In the smoke-filled passageways of the Pentagon, amid the chaos of the World Trade Center, with American warriors near Afghanistan, Navy chaplains have been front and center. You have cared for the injured and consoled the grieving. You have sustained a multitude of traumatized survivors and supported an army of exhausted rescuers. You have provided insight and inspiration to men and women on the front lines of a global struggle fraught with danger and clouded in complexity. You are their chaplains and you have served them well.

While it is true that not every Navy chaplain was called to respond directly to the horrible destruction of September 11th, it is just as true that we are all part of one Chaplain Corps. In our unity we strengthen the whole, and draw strength from it. We also draw strength from our unity with the chaplains who served before us. Their vision in peace and sacrifice in war built the institutional structure upon which we stand today, and provide the spiritual, moral, and practical measuring rod by which we judge our efforts now and on into the future.

The Navy Chaplain Corps has come a long way since November 28, 1775, when the second article of Navy Regulations was adopted, directing ship captains to see that "divine services be performed twice a day on board and a sermon preached on Sundays...." Across more than two and a quarter centuries, Navy chaplains have ministered the grace of God to Sea Services personnel, led their leaders in ground breaking institutional improvements, and pioneered countless advances in the professionalism of chaplains throughout our Corps.

Ours is a tremendous heritage. As we pause to celebrate our birthday, I encourage you to review that heritage, to honor it in appropriate ceremony, and to perpetuate it with innovative, life-transforming service. Happy 226th Birthday!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. C. Black", is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

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