



From Your Chaplain, Fr. Dan Brandt...

I received some nice feedback from last month's column regarding wake services. I was glad to make the distinction between the Police Chaplains' Unit (who daily provide pastoral care and crisis ministry to our police/retired police family), and the St. Jude League (who generously conduct wake services on the occasion of police family deaths). While we are different entities, we work well together and share a common goal of providing comfort to our officers in difficult times.

As many can attest, when a police family member dies, it means the world to the officer when his or her brothers and sisters in blue (and white) assemble for the St. Jude wake service. Please keep that in mind in the coming year. In fact, it might make a good new year's resolution to make an increased effort to attend the wakes of your coworkers' loved ones.

A couple weeks ago (November 29th), we hosted our Gold Star Families for dinner on the club level of Soldier Field, overlooking the Police Memorial to the east and the football field to the west. It was a wonderful evening, made possible through YOUR support of Police Chaplains Ministry. Thank you! If you are not yet a supporter of Police Chaplains Ministry but would like to become one, please call us or visit our website to join our mailing list.

Christmas for Our Troops: Many thanks to P.O./Explosives Tech Dominick Kearns and his dedicated team of volunteers who assembled the Christmas care packages we sent to our troops overseas. And thanks to so many of you who generously supported this great cause! As you read this note, the packages are on their way to their recipients...our brothers and sisters who have switched uniforms, but continue to carry out the mission of protecting freedom and rights.

Good news... The number of our officers serving in Afghanistan is down from years past. I can't wait until ALL of our men and women are home with their families and us...for good!

A big THANK YOU to all who supported the **Enforcers Football Team**-sponsored toy drive on 09 DEC! And **thanks** to the Enforcers who helped provide smiles to some of the neediest kids in our city. What a great way to get into the holiday spirit!

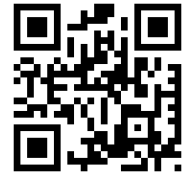
On a less happy note: Did you know that last year, twice as many police officers nationwide died from suicide as were killed by an offender in the line of duty? As you will agree, this is a most unfortunate and alarming statistic. To address this crisis, next month (21 JAN), we'll be co-hosting (along with the Chicago Police Memorial Foundation) an all-day **Police Suicide Awareness and Prevention Seminar** in Oak Brook. Two nationally-renowned speakers on this subject will be with us

that day. Invitations went out to all who are involved in training police officers and candidates, all Peer Support members, Employee Assistance Program employees, supervisors, *et al.* If this is an area you would like to learn more about, please let me know, and we'll do our best to make room for you at the seminar.

Police Mass: Please note: the Police Mass at Mercy Home (1140 W. Jackson Blvd) on Sunday 09 DEC, and Sunday, 23 DEC, is at its normal time of 11:00 a.m. But on Christmas Day, Tuesday, 25 DEC, we'll offer Mass at **10:00 a.m.** in order to get you home sooner to open gifts and prepare dinner. While this is a Catholic Mass, ALL are welcome! Bring your family.

If the Chaplains Ministry can be of ANY assistance to you in any way, please do not hesitate to call on us 24/7.

As a Christian, I celebrate Christmas, of course. But we are a diverse group...so *whatever* holiday you might celebrate this special time of year, may God be a big part of it—with abundant blessings to you and your family!



Fraternally,

Fr. Dan Brandt, CPD Chaplain

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