

# U.S. Army Chaplaincy

## **What Army Chaplains Do:**

As an Army chaplain you will have the responsibility of caring for the spiritual well being of Soldiers and their Families. An Army chaplain's parish can consist of over 1,500 people. For this reason, the Army chaplain is crucial to the success of the Army's mission. Exercising leadership in things that are spiritual requires a special person with a unique calling.

The Army Chaplaincy is a religiously diverse population reflecting the diversity of the Army, yet each chaplain must minister in accordance to the guidelines of their distinct faith group. Army Chaplains oversee the spiritual care of their assigned units wherever they may train or deploy. They also assist with the congregational care of their assigned posts performing religious ceremonies, rituals, and rites in accordance to their respective faiths.

Unlike most officers in the Army, a chaplain begins serving as a staff officer immediately. As a member of the commander's special staff, the chaplain is responsible for providing advice in matters pertaining to religion, morals, and morale. The chaplain serves the Army with a chaplain assistant (56M) as part of a Unit Ministry Team (UMT). As a non-combatant, chaplains do not possess a weapon. The chaplain assistant provides security for the UMT and assists with the administrative aspects of the UMT's ministry. Fully trained in the technical arena of religious support and Soldier-specific tasks, chaplain assistants are an integral part of the UMT's ministry and mission.

## **Other roles and responsibilities common to the chaplaincy:**

- Overseeing a full program of religious ministries, including workshops, counseling sessions, religious education and special events.
- Officiating at official ceremonies such as military functions, funerals, and memorials.
- Providing religious ministry to a variety of armed service personnel and civilians from the US, foreign nations, and agencies.

## **Requirements:**

To be an Officer in the Army Chaplain Corps, you must obtain an ecclesiastical endorsement from your faith group. This endorsement should certify that you are:

- An ordained elder in the Church of the Nazarene.
- Qualified spiritually, morally, intellectually and emotionally to serve as a Chaplain in the Army.
- Sensitive to religious pluralism and able to provide for the free exercise of religion for all military personnel, their family members and civilians who work for the Army.
- Possess a baccalaureate degree of not less than 120 semester hours.
- Possess a 72-semester hour graduate degree in theological or religious studies. This is usually a Masters of Divinity degree.

## **Training:**

Chaplains do not go through Army Basic Training. Instead, they attend the Chaplain Basic Officer Leadership Course (CBOLC), which is a 12-week course taught at Fort Jackson, S.C. This course provides an introduction to the non-combatant common core skills, Army writing and Chaplaincy-specific training.

## **Helpful Skills :**

Being a leader in the Army requires certain qualities. A leader exhibits self-discipline, initiative, confidence and intelligence. They are physically fit and can perform under physical and mental pressures. Leaders make decisions quickly, always focusing on completing the mission successfully, and show respect for their subordinates and other military officers. Leaders lead from the front and adjust to environments that are always changing. They are judged by their ability to make decisions on their own and bear ultimate moral responsibility for those decisions.

## **Chaplain Candidate Program**

If you're in a graduate-level seminary, you have an excellent opportunity to explore ministry in the Army and to become an officer and a Chaplain Candidate now. You learn. You serve. Upon entering the program, you are immediately commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Army Reserve or Army National Guard, earning pay commensurate with your rank. Several programs are available for Army Chaplain Candidates.

### **Chaplain Candidate Program for Army Reserve**

- In the first summer, you may attend up to 11 1/2 weeks of Chaplain Officer Basic Course at The United States Army Chaplain Center and School. During subsequent summers, you'll train up to 45 days by:
- Assisting an Army Chaplain at an Army post located in the United States.
- Participating in a special training program designed to develop your pastoral skills (including special language studies and clinical pastoral education).

### **Chaplain Candidate Program for National Guard Candidates**

- During the first summer, you may attend up to 11 1/2 weeks of Chaplain Officer Basic Course at The United States Army Chaplain Center and School.
- After completing the Chaplain Officer Basic Course, you will attend drills with a National Guard unit, usually one weekend a month plus two weekends of active duty in the summer, for each year you are at seminary.
- You will have the opportunity to assist the chaplain with worship services and provide other spiritual services to soldiers and their families.

**For More Information Contact:** Chaplain Don Wilson, Military Chaplain Endorser, at [donwilson@nazarene.org](mailto:donwilson@nazarene.org) or 1.800.233.8962