

# Church Ministries / Departments

## Department of Chaplaincies

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## Mission

The mission of the OCA's military chaplains is the propagation of the Orthodox Faith; to serve, worship, and love our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; and to bring spiritual nourishment and enlightenment to thousands of Orthodox military personnel and their families serving their country throughout the world.

The mission of the Veterans Administration (VA) chaplains is to counsel and to bring spiritual nourishment through the Holy Sacraments to hundreds of Orthodox veterans in VA Medical Centers throughout the United States of America.

## Operation

The department of chaplaincies operates directly under the supervision of His Beatitude Metropolitan Herman and forms a unique deanery of the Church. According to the Statutes of the Orthodox Church in America (Article II, section 5), deaneries within the boundaries of a diocese are established by the diocesan council. However, the Dean of Orthodox Military Chaplains is appointed by and directly responsible to the Metropolitan (Cf. Article II, section 7p).

The Executive Director and Dean of Chaplains is the chief administrator for the Metropolitan in all matters concerning the OCA chaplains in the Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard, and the Veterans Administration, and the Federal Bureau of Prison Chaplains. The Executive Director/Dean is the representative of the Metropolitan to the National Conference of Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF) and the Endorsers Conference for Veterans Affairs Chaplaincy (ECVAC). The Assistant Executive Director works together with the Executive Director.

The Executive Director/Dean and the Assistant Executive Director recruit and screen candidates for the chaplaincy, prepare ecclesiastical endorsements for the Metropolitan, and maintain contact with all Orthodox chaplains and with the Executive Director of the Armed Services Chaplains Board. They do this through telecommunications, email, correspondence, and by participating in various meetings and site visitations throughout the world. The Executive Director/Dean provides guidance to chaplains serving throughout the world on spiritual matters and ensures that Orthodox personnel, regardless of where they are stationed, can freely exercise their religious beliefs. The Executive Director/Dean also attends all conferences and executive board committee meetings of the NCMAF and ECVAC.

Chaplains from The Orthodox Church in America serve in the U.S. Armed Forces in the US, and in Germany, Korea, Japan, the Middle East, Iraq, and Afghanistan.

## Accomplishments/Progress Since the 13th All-American Council

- ♦ The department successfully recruited chaplains for service in the armed forces and at Veterans Affairs Medical Centers.
- ♦ The department actively participates in the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF) and the Endorsers Conference for Veterans Affairs Chaplaincy (ECVAC).
- ♦ The V. Rev. Theodore Boback was elected to the executive board of the ECVAC and appointed to the NCMAF Public Issues and Concerns Committee.

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- ◆ The department wrote spoken presentations and position papers for His Beatitude Metropolitan Herman.
- ◆ The department participated at meetings involving the Department of State, Department of Defense, and such institutions as the United States Institute of Peace.
- ◆ The department reviewed and enhanced various models of ministry for enriching family life in the military environment, as well as the quality of life for single service members.
- ◆ Department members made visits to both St. Tikhon's and St Vladimir's Seminaries.
- ◆ The department publishes a semi-annual newsletter.
- ◆ Department members attended workshops and conferences of The Orthodox Church in America, as well as the Evangelization and Parish Ministries Conferences, during the summer of 2004, at St. Vladimir's Seminary.
- ◆ Department members met regularly with Metropolitan Herman, Father Kondratick, other Department members, and chaplains on active duty.
- ◆ Participation in the OCA's 2003 Missions Conference in Boulder City, NV.
- ◆ The department conducted a feasibility study for a Memorial Shrine for Veterans and Chaplaincy.
- ◆ We re-emphasized the financial responsibility of active-duty chaplains for designated offerings (OCA Special Appeals) and annual assessments.
- ◆ We also re-emphasized offerings to the Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards.

The V. Rev. Theodore Boback attended the National Conference on Ministry to the Armed Forces (NCMAF), the Endorsers Conference for Veterans Affairs Chaplaincy (ECVAC), and the Federal Bureau of Prison Ministry Conference for Endorsers and Directors. He was elected to a three-year term on the Executive Board of ECVAC and a three-year term on the Public Issues and Concerns Committee of NCMAF.

Fr. Boback was invited to attend the Interfaith Service of Dedication of the World War II Memorial at the National Cathedral in Washington, DC, as well as the installation of the new Veterans Affairs (VA) Chief of Chaplains, Chaplain Hugh Maddry. He attended the Veterans Affairs initiative and faith-based conference at which the Honorable Gordon H. Mansfield, Deputy Secretary of the VA; Darin Selnick, Director of VA Faith-Based Initiatives; and Jerry White, White House Special Assistant for Faith-Based Policy, took part. He also participated in the VA Chaplaincy Convocation and 60th anniversary of the VA Chaplaincy, and was trained and certified in Disaster Preparedness Training by the VA and Red Cross.

Orthodox chaplains perform a full cycle of liturgical services including: Vespers, Matins, Divine Liturgy, Feast Day services, services during Advent, Great Lent, the Dormition and Apostles' Fasts, Presanctified Liturgy, and administering the Sacraments of the Church.

*The Ministry of Concern includes:*

## **Spiritual Renewal**

- ◆ Chapel leadership training programs
- ◆ Annual retreats
- ◆ Youth and religious education retreats and outings
- ◆ Marriage and family enhancement seminars

## **Ministry of Presence**

- ◆ Base/Installation/Post work areas — chaplain visitation programs
- ◆ Flight line chaplain visitation programs
- ◆ Deployment programs
- ◆ Home and dorm visitations
- ◆ Invocations for various dinners, graduations, and award banquets

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## Readiness

- ♦ Training and field exercises
- ♦ Deployment coverage
- ♦ Transition workshops for service members
- ♦ Transition workshops for families, spouses, children
- ♦ Welcome-home ceremonies
- ♦ Memorial ceremonies

## Other Areas

- ♦ Veterans Affairs Medical Center visitations and services
- ♦ Fellowship of Orthodox Stewards
- ♦ Humanitarian Assistance/Mission projects
- ♦ Thanksgiving food basket programs
- ♦ Christmas food basket programs
- ♦ Nursing home visitations
- ♦ International Orthodox Christian Charities humanitarian aid programs
- ♦ Pre-marital and marital counseling

## Chaplains are members of the following committees

- ♦ Family Action board, Family Advocacy committee
- ♦ Family Service Advisory council
- ♦ Biomedical Ethics committee
- ♦ Biomedical advisory and peer-review boards
- ♦ Persons with Disabilities board
- ♦ Juvenile Assistance committee
- ♦ Department of Defense 2000 committees
- ♦ Equal-Opportunity committee

## Interfaith and Ecumenical Ministries programs

- ♦ Vacation Bible School
- ♦ National Prayer Breakfast
- ♦ Thanksgiving Day/Eve programs
- ♦ Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., program
- ♦ Quarterly leadership prayer breakfasts
- ♦ Training events

## *Ongoing functions, programs, and services of the department:*

- ♦ Provides worship/rites and pastoral support to the men and women of the armed forces.
- ♦ Advises the chaplains on international matters that may affect the external affairs of the Church.
- ♦ Provides Orthodox presence at the highest levels of government.
- ♦ Provides Orthodox presence and participation at meetings and conferences.

## Military Personnel Strength

Personnel statistics have changed through the years and continue to change based on the requirements of the armed forces in fulfilling its missions.

*With regards to chaplains serving in the Middle East:* Currently one Chaplain from The Orthodox Church in America, Fr. Peter Dubinin, is serving in the Iraq theater of operations. Fr. Dubinin was called to active duty by the United States Army Reserve Component. Fr. Jerome Cwiklinski completed two tours of duty in the region with his Navy unit, assigned as a chaplain with the United States Marines. Fr. Paul Schellbach also served in Iraq for over one year. Fr. Mark Kozak served on the *USS Comfort*.

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*Other priests who served short-term assignments of less than a month included:* Fr. Eugene Wozniak, with the United States Marines, and Fr. John Stefero, with the United States Air Force.

In 2005, Fr. Joseph Gallick was deployed to Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan for 30 days during the Post-Nativity holy days and prior to Great Lent. His deployment was based on a request from Metropolitan Herman to the Army Chief of Chaplains Office and subsequent coordination involving Fr. Theodore Boback and the staff officers at the Army Chief of Chaplains Office. Fr. John Anderson was deployed to Afghanistan for Holy Week and Pascha in 2005.

*Other recalls to active duty:* One Reserve Component priest who has been notified of possible activation to active duty in the month of June 2005.

*Our current personnel outlook is reflected in the following table. In each column, the figures at left indicate the number of OCA chaplains, while the figures within the parentheses indicate the number of non-OCA Orthodox chaplains. The bottom line — “Totals” — shows the total number of Orthodox chaplains from all jurisdictions:*

<b>Branch</b>	<b>Active Duty</b>	<b>Reserve activated</b>		
		<i>(normally one year)</i>	<b>Reserve</b>	<b>National Guard</b>
Air Force	3 (2)	0	1 (2)	0
Army	4 (1)	3 (0)	3 (1)	1 (0)
Navy	5 (4)	0	1 (3)	0 (0)
<i>Subtotals</i>	12 (7)	3 (0)	5 (6)	1 (0)
<i>Totals</i>	19	3	11	1

## Active Duty Forces

- 12 (64%) of all Orthodox chaplains on active duty in the US Armed Forces are priests of The Orthodox Church in America.
- 3 (16%) are priests of the Antiochian Archdiocese.
- 3 (16%) are priests of the Greek Archdiocese.
- 1 (4%) is a priest of the Carpatho-Russian Diocese.

Reserve Component chaplains are called to active duty for a period of one year. All three of the reservist Orthodox priests currently called up for active duty are from The Orthodox Church in America. These three OCA priests were called to active duty from their Reserve Component Army units. Upon completion of their duty they will return to Reserve Component status.

## Reserve Component

- 8 (57%) of all Orthodox chaplains in the Reserve Component of the US Armed Forces are priests of The Orthodox Church in America.
- 4 (29%) are priests of the Greek Archdiocese.
- 1 (7%) is a priest of the Antiochian Archdiocese.
- 1 (7%) is a priest of the Serbian Diocese.

## National Guard

Currently the only Orthodox chaplain in the US National Guard is a priest of The Orthodox Church in America.

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## Overall

- 21 (62%) of all Orthodox chaplains in the US Armed Forces are priests of The Orthodox Church in America.
- 7 (20%) are priests of the Greek Archdiocese.
- 4 (12%) are priests of the Antiochian Archdiocese.
- 1 (3%) is a priest of the Carpatho-Russian Diocese.
- 1 (3%) is a priest of the Serbian Diocese.

## Comparison

*Total Active Duty Chaplain Force and Orthodox Chaplains*

<b>Branch</b>	<b>Total Chaplains</b>	<b>Orthodox Chaplains</b>
Air Force	621	5
Army	1380	5
Navy	901	9

*Orthodox chaplains are:*

0.8% of the US Air Force Chaplaincy

0.4% of the US Army Chaplaincy

1.0% of the US Navy Chaplaincy

The Army Chaplaincy is expected to add more Orthodox chaplains in the future.

## Chaplain Candidates

Currently, one seminarian is a chaplain candidate for service in the US Army. There is a need for Orthodox chaplains in all branches of the armed forces, especially with the retirement of the current group of Orthodox chaplains in the coming years.

## Endorsing Conferences

The Orthodox Church in America is a member of three endorsing organizations, including the *National Conference of Ministry to the Armed Forces* (NCMAF) and the *Endorser Conference for Veterans Affairs Chaplaincy* (ECVAC) whose membership is drawn from more than 250 faith groups and denominations. The other endorsing organization is the *Federal Bureau of Prison Ministry*.

To be considered by any of these endorsing bodies, a candidate for chaplaincy must first have an ecclesiastical endorsement from His Beatitude Metropolitan Herman. The three organizations meet annually in December. Metropolitan Herman, as endorser, and Fr. Boback, as the Director/Dean of chaplaincies, serve as members of the organizations. Fr. Boback has served in the past on the executive board of the NCMAF. He currently serves on the executive board of ECVAC, and has previously chaired the group. He also serves on the public issues and concerns committee of the NCMAF.

Since there is an organic connection between the armed forces and veterans affairs, the NCMAF and ECVAC meet at the same time. The Federal Bureau of Prisons is a stand-alone organization, not under the purview of the NCMAF and ECVAC, so its Prison Ministry arm meets a day before the NCMAF and ECVAC conferences.

*Overview of specialized training and classes conducted:*

Most, if not all, Orthodox military chaplains have training in the following:

- ◆ Suicide prevention
- ◆ Moral leadership development
- ◆ Personal values/values clarification
- ◆ Stress management/time management

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- ◆ Marriage enrichment
- ◆ Chaplain orientation
- ◆ Crisis incident response and critical incident stress management

In addition, some chaplains receive specialized training in areas including:

- ◆ ethics
- ◆ family life
- ◆ alcohol and drug counseling
- ◆ fund management
- ◆ administration
- ◆ combat developments
- ◆ training and curriculum development
- ◆ task analysis and development
- ◆ total quality management
- ◆ facility management
- ◆ security management
- ◆ interpersonal relationship development
- ◆ leadership development
- ◆ organizational effectiveness and development
- ◆ marriage and family-life training and counseling
- ◆ clinical-pastoral education
- ◆ hospital ministry
- ◆ confinement ministry and volunteerism

*Military chaplains from The Orthodox Church in America are assigned throughout the world. Here is a brief overview of who they are - and where they are currently ministering to the needs of our faithful in the United States military.*

## Active Duty

### UNITED STATES AIR FORCE

#### **Father Eugene Lahue, Chaplain Captain**

Father Eugene is in his first assignment in the United States Air Force Chaplaincy. He ministers to the Air Force's largest Orthodox community as he serves military training facilities, defense language institutes, and all active-duty personnel. He serves as a squadron chaplain and is a member of the Religious Resource Board. He is also a member of the Executive Board Committee on Sexual Assault and Outreach and Advocacy. When he completed his service in the United States Army, he received the Army Commendation Medal 2nd Oak Leaf Cluster. He is scheduled to be assigned to England on his next tour of duty.

#### **Father John Stefero, Chaplain Colonel**

Having returned from Germany as the European Command Chaplain, Fr. John now serves as Command Chaplain with the Air Education and Training Command at Lackland AFB in Texas, where he directs and maintains the chaplain service. He develops and implements guidance related to direction, advice, and policy on matters of religion, ethics, morals, and quality-of-life issues. He advises the commander and staff on spiritual and ethical matters. He celebrates the Divine Liturgy with Fr. Lahue at Lackland AFB twice a month. He was instrumental in procuring \$1 million to renovate the memorial chapel at Lackland AFB, which the Orthodox community uses for worship. Fr. John ministered to the Orthodox servicemembers in Iraq during Pascha in 2005.

#### **Father Timothy Ullmann, Chaplain Major**

Fr. Timothy is with the 86th Air Wing in Germany where he provides religious support to airmen and families; advises the senior leadership on matters of religion, ethics, and morality; and plans, organizes, and implements a comprehensive

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sive ministry of presence. He develops and conducts deployment reintegration training supporting the Global War on Terrorism. As the senior interfaith chaplain, he supervises the Jewish and Muslim chaplains while maintaining comprehensive oversight of the needs of their communities. He also provides the Orthodox coverage to the Ramstein/Kaiserslautern community. Fr. Timothy received the Master of Military Operational Art and Science degree and is a graduate of the Air Command and Staff College.

## UNITED STATES AIR FORCE RESERVE COMPONENT

**Father James Jadick**, *Chaplain Lt. Col.*

Fr. James was called to active duty and served at Lackland AFB, TX, as Individual Mobilization Augmentee to the Basic Military Training Chapel.

## UNITED STATES ARMY

**Father John Anderson**, *Chaplain Major*

Fr. John is assigned to Fort Lewis, WA, where he serves with Special Forces. He was deployed to Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, where he provided Orthodox pastoring and services during Holy Week and the Paschal season.

**Father Peter Baktis**, *Chaplain Major*

Fr. Peter is the Officer Task Analyst at the Chaplain Center and School. He integrates Chaplain Doctrine and Chaplain Training while providing Orthodox services for soldiers assigned to Fort Jackson, SC. He is a performance consultant for all critical task training at the Chaplain Center and School, where he performs needs assessment and task analysis for all officer ranks to establish valid training requirements. He represents the training directorate within the Chief of Chaplains' integrated process team in coordination with Combat Developments to address training needs assessment, and he supervises the Enlisted Task Analysis. He was presented the Order of Titus last year. He also presented a paper on Orthodox/Islamic relations for the Institute of Inter-religious and Intercultural Dialogue in Macedonia.

**Father Matthew Olson**, *Chaplain Captain*

Fr. Matthew completed training for which he was selected by the US Army Chaplain Board and now serves as the Chief of Ministry and Pastoral Care at Fort Leonard Wood, MO, where he provides religious and ministerial care to a hospital staff of over 900 personnel. As hospital chaplain at Fort Leonard Wood he provides the healing, sustaining, guiding, and reconciling power of religious faith to patients and their family members. He is responsible for spiritual care and activities at the post hospital, which has 75 operational beds, a 90-bed infirmary, a consolidated troop medical clinic, a dental facility, and veterinary services. Through his actions, he helps to ensure the readiness and deployability of soldiers. He advises the commander and provides support to the installation chaplain.

**Father Joseph Velez**, *Chaplain Captain*

Fr. Joseph serves at Fort Sill, OK, where he is assigned to a Multiple Launch Rocket System Field Artillery Battalion in the III Corps. He is responsible for direct religious support of the soldiers in his unit. He advises the Command and regularly conducts training that includes marriage enrichment, morals and values, spiritual fitness, and suicide awareness. He received the Army Commendation Medal 1st Oak Leaf Cluster for extraordinary achievement in providing comprehensive and effective pastoral care and spiritual leadership. Fr. Joseph is scheduled to move to Korea this summer.

## UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE COMPONENT ON ACTIVE DUTY

**Father Peter Dubinin**, *Chaplain Captain*

In the Army Reserve Component, Fr. Peter serves the 5th Special Forces Group. He has also served as pastor of the Orthodox community at Fort Campbell, KY. He was recalled to active duty in August 2004 and served at Fort Campbell as a backfill through December 2004. Fr. Peter was recently deployed to Iraq, where he currently serves. He has received the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal as well as the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal and the Army Reserve Medal with M device. He holds a Master of Arts in Education degree from Austin Peay State University.

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## **Father Joseph Gallick, *Chaplain Lieutenant Colonel***

Based at Fort Drum, NY, Fr. Joseph was called to active duty for one year in October 2004. He recently returned from Afghanistan, where he was deployed to provide Orthodox pastoring to service members during the Post-Nativity holy days as well as to prepare for the visit of the Orthodox chaplain who would serve during Holy Week and Pascha. Fr. Joseph is preparing a special report on his deployment to Afghanistan.

## **Father Paul Schellbach, *Chaplain Major***

With his California Reserve Component unit, Fr. Paul was called to active duty in 2004 and has served in Iraq. He returned to the United States in January 2005. He completed the Chaplain Advanced Course, United States Army Chaplain School, Fort Jackson, SC, in November 2004. He was awarded the Global War on Terrorism Service and Expeditionary Medals as well as the Army Commendation Medal. He is now serving at Fort Irwin, CA.

## UNITED STATES ARMY RESERVE COMPONENT

### **Father Alexander Webster, *Chaplain Colonel***

Fr. Alexander has been promoted to the rank of colonel. He serves as the Division Chaplain and is expecting a change of assignment in June or July 2005 to the post of Deputy Command Chaplain for the Military District of Washington. He has received the Virginia National Guard Bronze Star Medal. Fr. Alexander is consulted on issues and concerns regarding ethics by the armed forces Chaplain Board.

### **Father Robert McMeekin, *Chaplain Captain***

Fr. Robert had been deployed and is currently serving with his Reserve Component Unit in Wisconsin.

### **Father David Meinzen, *Chaplain Captain***

Fr. David serves in the Indiana Reserve Component Unit.

### **Father Theodore Shomsky, *Chaplain Major***

Fr. Theodore is in the Individual Ready Reserve and is in West Virginia. He was recently promoted to the rank of major.

## UNITED STATES NAVY

### **Father Jerome Cwiklinski, *CDR***

Fr. Jerome is assigned to the 1st Special Force Support Service Group at Camp Pendleton, CA and is command chaplain for deployed elements. In that capacity, he directly supervises nine organic and attached Religious Ministry Teams, and he provides technical supervision of Religious Ministry Teams of the Marine Aircraft Wing and of Army Unit Ministry Teams located at the camp. He also serves as the Pastoral Care Director for the Surgical Shock Trauma Platoon at Camp Pendleton. He has served two tours as priest and chaplain in Iraq, and has advised commanders on religious questions while stationed there. At Camp Pendleton, he installed and dedicated a new Iconostasis. Fr. Jerome is active in the Pan-Orthodox Clergy Association and has implemented an aggressive suicide awareness and prevention program for the commanding general both stateside and in Iraq. He has been recommended for the Presidential Unit Citation.

### **Father Stephen Duessenberry, *LT***

Fr. Stephen is a Group Chaplain in Japan and facilitates the free exercise of religion for his command, while performing Orthodox Sacraments and Divine Services. He has received the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, and the Sea Service Deployment Ribbon.

### **Father Mark Koczak, *LCDR***

Fr. Mark was Command Chaplain of the *USNS Comfort* providing pastoral care and visitation. He acted as an effective liaison with religious dignitaries from host nations during port calls. Fr. Mark also advised the commander on sensitive religious matters, and he conducted workshops and classes on various topics, including substance abuse. He has since received an assignment at the Naval Air Station Oceana in Virginia, where he is chaplain to a 1600-member detachment. Fr. Mark has received the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal and the Global War on Terrorism Service Medal.



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## **Father Andrew Nelko, LCDR**

Fr. Andrew serves in the Naval Medical Center Pastoral Care Department, maintaining operational readiness and operating a health-care education center of excellence. As staff chaplain, he serves as the training department head of the Pastoral Care Service and is the administrator for the Clinical Pastoral Education Residency Program. He also serves in the Bereavement Conference Project Office. Fr. Andrew is certified in the administration of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Assessment.

## **Father Eugene Wozniak, LT**

Fr. Eugene served his first assignment at Camp Lejeune, NC, in an outstanding and exemplary manner, providing Orthodox pastoral coverage to the base. He counseled young Marines, participated in field exercises, conducted stress management and suicide awareness classes, and advised the commander. He designed a superior new suicide prevention program for the School of Infantry, incorporating standards unique to the training environment. He is currently deployed to Iraq.

## UNITED STATES NAVY RESERVE COMPONENT

### **Father David Pratt, LCDR**

Fr. David is living and studying in Belgium. He serves with the Reserve Component and has provided Orthodox pastoral service to various military units on a contract basis. Since Fr. John Anderson was reassigned to Fort Lewis, WA, Fr. David has provided pastoral coverage to Orthodox personnel in the Netherlands.

## **Retired Military Chaplains**

There are 22 chaplains who have retired from the United States Armed Forces. Fifteen of the priests are from The Orthodox Church in America. Five of the priests are from the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese. One priest is from the Antiochian Archdiocese and one is from the Carpatho-Russian Diocese. The retired chaplains have a range of special skills and are an additional asset within our Orthodox Church.

## **Veterans Affairs Medical Center Chaplains**

More than 12 priests from The Orthodox Church in America are endorsed by and serve in the VA Medical Centers, as part-time, contract, intermittent, and full-time VA chaplains. In addition, a number of clergy from the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America are also VA chaplains. OCA chaplains serve in leadership positions as Chief Service Chaplains at major medical centers, provide pastoral care, lead sessions on substance abuse, provide counseling, offer prayer, speak, and preach. At VA events in rehab and extended care centers, they minister to divisions that have more than 60 patients at a time, attend weekly multi-disciplinary meetings, and train for hospice care, age-based care, counseling, and education.

## **Federal Bureau of Prison Ministry Chaplaincy**

The Federal Bureau of Prison Ministry Chaplaincy is not organized within the same framework or structure as the Military Chaplaincy and Veterans Affairs Chaplaincy. Several Orthodox priests serve in the Prison Ministry Chaplaincy. Fr. Duane Pederson and Fr. David Ogan are of the Antiochian Archdiocese. Fr. John Brown, of the OCA's Diocese of the Midwest, is a full-time prison ministry chaplain.

## **Plans for the Future**

- ◆ Ensure that the Orthodox Tradition is upheld in a pluralistic environment.
- ◆ Ensure that Orthodoxy speaks with one voice.
- ◆ Ensure that Orthodoxy is not dismissed as a religious body within the Department of State and Department of Defense as well as in the various support organizations such as NCMF and ECVAC.
- ◆ Maintain our role and the Orthodox voice in NCMF and ECVAC meetings.

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- ◆ Be proactive with the chaplaincy programs of other autocephalous Orthodox Churches.
- ◆ Ensure our leadership within military chaplaincy and Veterans Affairs chaplaincy support organizations.
- ◆ Recruit and procure Orthodox priests for active military duty, Veterans Affairs, and Federal Prison Ministry chaplaincies.
- ◆ Coordinate an annual Orthodox training development seminar and conference for Orthodox military and Veterans Affairs chaplains.
- ◆ Advise the Chief of Chaplains, and recommend to him the requirements for Orthodox chaplains.
- ◆ Visit Orthodox military communities.
- ◆ Update the military and VA chaplaincies handbook.
- ◆ Develop an Orthodox recruiting brochure for military and VA chaplaincies.
- ◆ Conduct an annual military and VA chaplains conference.
- ◆ Review and update our strategic plan for the military and VA chaplaincies.
- ◆ Proceed with the feasibility study and implementation of a memorial shrine for veterans and chaplains.
- ◆ Initiate a diocesan recruitment plan for the military chaplaincy.
- ◆ Expand the seminarian chaplaincy recruitment program.
- ◆ Enhance the chaplaincy newsletter.

At the NCMAF, ECVAC, and Federal Prison Ministry meetings, it often becomes necessary for us to clarify what The Orthodox Church in America is and who it endorses as chaplains. Moreover, because some other groups call themselves Orthodox (e.g., the *Federated Orthodox Catholic Church United Sacramentally*, the *Orthodox Catholic Church* and the *African Orthodox Church*), we must also clarify who the Orthodox really are.

## Need for Chaplains

Recruitment of seminarians for the military chaplain candidate program in the various branches of the armed forces continues to be conducted by both the Dean/Director of Chaplains and active-duty or reserve-component chaplains. The Dean/Director also recruits for the VA and Federal Prison Ministry chaplaincies. There is a continued need for chaplains to serve within these three areas. If you know of any priest who might be interested, or if you are interested in serving, please contact the OCA's Department of Chaplaincies.

## Summary/Conclusion

We pray that our Lord will grant His choicest Blessings to the ecclesiastical endorser and our primate, Metropolitan Herman, and grant him many years! We wish to thank His Beatitude for his continued archpastoral guidance and leadership within the Department of Chaplaincies. We express our gratitude to the Holy Synod of Bishops for providing priests as candidates for His Beatitude to endorse for the military and Veterans Affairs chaplaincies and for your prayers.

In addition, Fr. Joseph Gallick, Fr. Frank Mayernick, Fr. Ken Stavrevsky, and Fr. Peter Telencio, who serve as members of the department — as well as our active and reserve-component military chaplains, our Veterans Affairs chaplains, and our Federal Prison Ministry chaplain — should be commended for their input and assistance. In the past three years, with the establishment of the Office of the Institutional Chaplains, chaired by Fr. Steven Voytovich, the Department of Chaplaincies has been able to work on various new topics and items of concern.

Our priests in uniform serve and minister in all parts of the world, providing for our Orthodox men and women service members with spirituality, dedication, love, and professional competency at all times and at all hours. Over the past few years, we have seen great changes in our world, with an inevitable impact on the pastoral skills required of military and other chaplains. The Orthodox faith in America needs to ensure its leadership role within all forms of chaplaincy. We need to remain steadfast, as we continue on our journey into the 21st century, that we will always go forth with faith, hope, and love in all our undertakings for God's glory and our Church.