

# CHAPLAIN

It is important to remember that our organization is composed of all faiths and religions. The role of the chaplain in our Disabled American Veterans Auxiliary is a very special one, and the duties of the chaplain are significant. A chaplain must always be aware when offering prayers and guidance not to offend any religion but to respect and honor all. Serving as chaplain provides the opportunity to guide other auxiliary members in fulfilling the purpose of our organization.

The chaplain may be called upon to render assistance in many ways – at unit meetings and to unit members and their families, and at department meetings and to all members of the department. The chaplain should be notified of those who are ill or deceased since it is the responsibility of this office to send out cards on behalf of the unit.

The chaplain shall also see that the unit adjutant has a list of the deceased members' names. The adjutant shall then notify the state department and national headquarters so that an acknowledgment can be sent. Nothing hurts more at the time of illness or bereavement than for fellow members to ignore this occurrence. This hurt is one that cannot be repaired, nor understood by the parties involved. It takes so little effort to call, send a card of get well or deepest sympathy. Of course a visitation on the local or department level should be arranged if possible.

As the spiritual leader of the auxiliary, it is important to follow the ritual for all regular meetings and to use the Blessing and Closing Prayer as printed for regular meetings or one that is applicable. By doing so, the auxiliary meetings will begin and end in an inspiring manner.

## SYMPATHY CARDS, BURIAL & MEMORIAL SERVICES FOR DEPARTED MEMBERS

The National Chaplain receives a monthly report of deceased members from National Headquarters. This report is derived from the names of the deceased that have been sent in by the unit adjutant or state adjutant. Upon receipt of this list, the National Chaplain mails a sympathy card to the deceased member's unit as an expression of sympathy to the unit upon the loss of the member. The unit might wish to pass this card on to the deceased member's family. It is important that the units contact the family at the time of death and render whatever assistance may be deemed appropriate. Often, the unit may be asked to assist with the burial service, and as a further tribute to their member, the unit may also want to use the Memorial For Deceased Members as printed in the National Constitution and Bylaws. SPECIAL REMINDER – please notify National Headquarters as soon as possible following a member's death. Also, each unit should notify their State Chaplain so that an appropriate message of sympathy may be sent to the member's family.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR SPECIAL MEMORIAL SERVICES

Many state departments have been holding a Special Memorial Service once a year, jointly with the parent organization, usually at the time of their state convention. Such services are one of the focal points of the annual convention, and a very appropriate manner in which to honor the memory of departed members.

In the event your state department does not currently conduct such memorial services, the following suggestions and ideas are presented for your consideration. Such a service could also be conducted on an

annual basis at the local unit and chapter level, if so desired. However, each state department and unit should feel free to choose the type of service they prefer to use.

### **FLORAL MEMORIAL SERVICE**

The service could include prayers and scripture readings by the state department DAV and Auxiliary chaplains, and possibly even responsive readings with all members participating. Appropriate musical selections could be used in between the prayers and readings, using the talents of the members within the organization. There are many fine singers and pianists. The Memorial Address could be given by the State Auxiliary Chaplain, possibly a government official, or even a local minister. Following the Memorial Address, as each deceased member's name is called out (by the adjutant) a representative of the deceased member's Chapter or Unit could approach the altar and place a long-stemmed flower in a special container. After all the names of the deceased members have been called, the state department DAV and State Auxiliary chaplains could light two large candles placed on the altar. The candles could be white, or one blue and one white. Following the floral ceremony, other musical selections could be included, and the service concluded with prayer followed by Taps.

Another variation of the above floral service could be as follows:

Include appropriate prayers, scripture readings, and musical selections and at the time the names of the deceased members are called out, a "forget-me-not" flower could be placed on a plain green circle wreath. (The wreath could be an artificial boxwood wreath or styrofoam, which could be used for several years.) By the time all names of deceased members are called, the "forget-me-nots" would be placed all the way around wreath. If desired, a green-covered

or white styrofoam cross could be used instead of the circle wreath.

NOTE: Junior auxiliary members could participate in the memorial service also, and could be of assistance by standing on each side of the wreath or cross, and place the forget-me-not flowers as the names of deceased are called.

### **CANDLE MEMORIAL SERVICES**

As in the floral services, it is suggested that your service include appropriate prayers, scripture readings and musical selections. You might want to have a posting of colors by a local ROTC group. Following the memorial address, as each deceased member's name is called, a representative of each chapter and unit would approach the altar or stage together. The auxiliary could light a candle and the chapter could place a small wreath of forget-me-nots at the base of each candle.

Another idea for using candles in your memorial service, as each departed member's name is called, the chaplain from each chapter and unit could carry a candle to the altar, lighting their candle from an eternal flame (one large candle in the center), and place their candles on stands near the altar. All white, or blue and white candles could be used.

The Memorial Service held during the National Convention is traditionally a candle service. In the event you have never attended, you might like to consider using this as a guide – The National Auxiliary Commander, National Sr. Vice Commander and the National Chaplain take their positions. The National Executive Committee Members of the DAV and the Auxiliary enter the room and walk two by two to the front of the room and are seated in the appropriate row. The National Chaplain of the DAV opens the service and calls on the National Auxiliary Chaplain for a prayer and the Auxiliary National Commander for

appropriate remarks. Sometimes as the district is called, the NEC's go forward together and using the candle already lit and held by the Senior Vice Commanders, they each light a candle. These are then placed on special stands, and the procession continues until all the districts have been represented. The program concludes with the playing of Taps, and all National Officers and NEC's march out of the room.

There are also times when the candles are lit prior to the opening. The appropriate remarks of remembrance are made and at the conclusion, the respective NEC's are called forward and extinguish their candles and then two by two walk up the aisle towards the rear of the room, or sometimes take their seat in the front of the room. When all candles are extinguished, "Taps" is played, followed by the closing prayer.

### **CROSS MEMORIAL SERVICE**

Still using the prayers, scripture readings and musical selections, as each deceased member's name is called out, a representative of the chapter and unit, (or a junior member) could place a small white cross, made of styrofoam, cardboard, or wood, in a slot on a specially-prepared board. The board could be covered with some material similar to Astroturf, to appear as grass. The over-all effect would be a miniature cemetery.

### **APPROPRIATE DRESS FOR A MEMORIAL SERVICE**

In each of the above suggested services, it would be most effective if the participants could either dress in white or blue and white, for example, the ladies could wear white dresses, and the men wear dark suits.

### **PROGRAM COVERS FOR MEMORIAL SERVICES**

An important part of any memorial service is the program and the schedule of events

listed inside. It is possible to obtain the seal of the DAV and the DAV Auxiliary with permission from National Headquarters, and these can be used. Also, there are many beautiful covers available at very reasonable prices at religious bookstores, which are located in most cities.

### **THE CHAPEL OF THE FOUR CHAPLAINS**

Located in Philadelphia, it is an interfaith memorial created in the memory of four brave men of God to strengthen unity in man's relationship with God and his fellow man. Its services are interfaith, acceptable to Protestant, Catholic and Jewish faiths.

February 3, 1943, the S.S. Dorchester was almost home, when it was struck by a torpedo. One of the survivors cried that he had lost his life jacket; the chaplain said he could have his since he would be staying. The other three chaplains followed suit, giving their life jackets to those who had none. No one remembers whether it was Lt. Clark Poling, Protestant; Lt. George M. Fox, Protestant; Lt. Alexander D. Goode, Rabbi; or Lt. John P. Washington, Catholic, that made the first decision to stay. It does not matter, for this bravery admits no division of faith or race. "The four stood together, their lips moving in prayer, each in the tradition of his faith...but the God they prayed to was One."

"I shall pass through this world but once, any good therefore that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer or neglect it for I shall not pass this way again."  
Attributed to Etienne De Grellet

### **PRAYERS FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS**

Dedication of Colors – Use the Suggested Prayer in the National Constitution and Bylaws.

**SPECIAL HOLIDAYS** – (Memorial Day, Veterans Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas, Easter, etc.)

It is suggested that you check with your local public library, book stores, and possibly your own church may have a library, where you will find many helpful books, pamphlets and literature. Below are a few suggested prayers that may be of use or may help you in presenting your services.



### **LET US REMEMBER**

Let me always remember, I am no better than any around me. You and I are working for Service to the Disabled Veteran. We are here in a common cause that must bind us together, regardless of religion, color, dress, speech or habit. I have not come here to judge you, but to work with you in harmony. True, we cannot agree on all things, but let each of us remember not to condemn or hold any malice towards the other because of these differences. We must always remember the purpose for which we have assembled, and when the business of the evening has been completed we will converse and join together in comradeship. Let us put all else aside, and join in unity for the good of the veteran and their loved ones, and most of all, for the good of ourselves whom we must constantly face.

Amen by M. Tedrow

### **A PRAYER ON THE DEATH OF FRIEND/LOVED ONE**

God, we praise You for Thy servant who labored and worshiped here on earth – especially for our member (name) who has departed this life and has awakened to a new life with You. Grant to (her/him) eternal joy and rest and let Your perpetual light shine upon (her/him), we ask in Your Holy Name. Amen

### **A PRAYER TO START THE DAY**

God, as we begin this new day, grant us the assurance of Your presence, as You inspired the prophets of old, inspire us; grant us the understanding to be the best we can be; help us to see Your will and presence in all that we do; in all that we strive to learn and do for others in our love for You and them. We ask this in Your name. Amen

### **A PRAYER TO OPEN A MEETING**

We ask Thee, O God, to bless the work of this meeting. Grant us clarity of thought, evenness of temperament, and willingness to persevere in Thy service; through Your Holy Name, we pray. Amen

### **A CLOSING PRAYER**

May the blessings of God Almighty rest upon us and upon our work, decisions made, plans formed, and service rendered to others. We ask that He give us light to guide us, courage to support us, and love to unite us, now and forevermore. Amen

### **A PRAYER FOR THE NATION**

Father and Ruler of all men, we thank and praise You for permitting a federation of peoples to grow into a Nation within our borders. We thank and praise You that You enabled this Nation to survive armed conflicts, cold wars, threats and rumors of war, and the uncertainties of life in this nuclear age.

We pray You make this Nation a haven for refugees, for the persecuted and the displaced; we pray You urge those in our Government that it will offer hope of freedom for all who swear allegiance to it. We pray You to forgive our sins of pride, bigotry, lawlessness and indifference. Forgive us for our waste of natural and human resources, for the neglect of our own rights and the rights of others. Enable us to conduct ourselves honorably as citizens and to

manage the affairs of Government sensibly. Permit this nation to prosper and to fulfill Your purpose to the good of mankind, we pray in Your Holy Name. Amen

### **A PRAYER FOR THE COMMUNITY**

Dear God, attend Your servants who enforce the rules, serve the sick, keep the store, teach the young, labor at their crafts, and minister with Your word. Preserve our community from recession and depression, epidemic and contagion, misrule and disharmony, fallout and pollution, drought and flood, fire and holocaust. Help all citizens to work for the common good through: useful inventions, helpful occupations, wholesome recreation, good manufacturing and above all meaningful education. Give them the grace to obey and trust Your Word. Amen

### **A PRAYER FOR A MEMBER WHO IS ILL**

Almighty, ever living God, maker of all mankind; we ask Thee to have mercy upon (name); give (her/him) grace to bear (her/his) (sickness/illness/surgery) with patience and courage; grant that (she/he) may recover, if it be Your will, and go on to serve You in newness of life, we ask in Your Holy Name. Amen

### **A PRAYER FOR VETERANS DAY**

O God, on this day we remember the horrors of war and Your mercies in stemming the destruction of global hostilities; I ask that You would preserve peace on earth, and guarantee eternal peace with Thee, and peace among all men. Put into the hearts of the rulers of all nations the folly of war, and teach them to establish good will by the spreading of Your love. Amen

### **A PRAYER FOR A VETERAN**

That he was a veteran of honor renown  
That he served his country, his city and town;  
That he was called in time of great need  
To protect us all from tyrants of greed;  
That when the battle was over and won  
He returned to his loved ones as his country's son;  
That though others might forget over the years ahead  
His comrades would remember to the day he was  
dead.

May we always remember his courageous deeds  
In the time of our country's urgent need.  
And so to his memory – a three gun salute  
As taps play softly for the one time recruit.  
May he enter the gates of his final reward  
And be received with honor in the House of  
the Lord.

### **A PRAYER FOR MEMORIAL DAY**

Dear God, in whom there is life and light; accept our prayers for those who died for us and those who mourn. Our gratitude and praise for the hope You have given us. Forgive us when our patriotism is hollow, our nationalism is arrogant, our allegiance is half-hearted. Stir within us thanksgiving for all we have inherited, vigilance for the freedoms of all peoples and thanks for the willingness to sacrifice from fellow citizens, of all religions and beliefs, who died in defense of our country. This is our prayer dear God. Amen