

CROSS FIRE

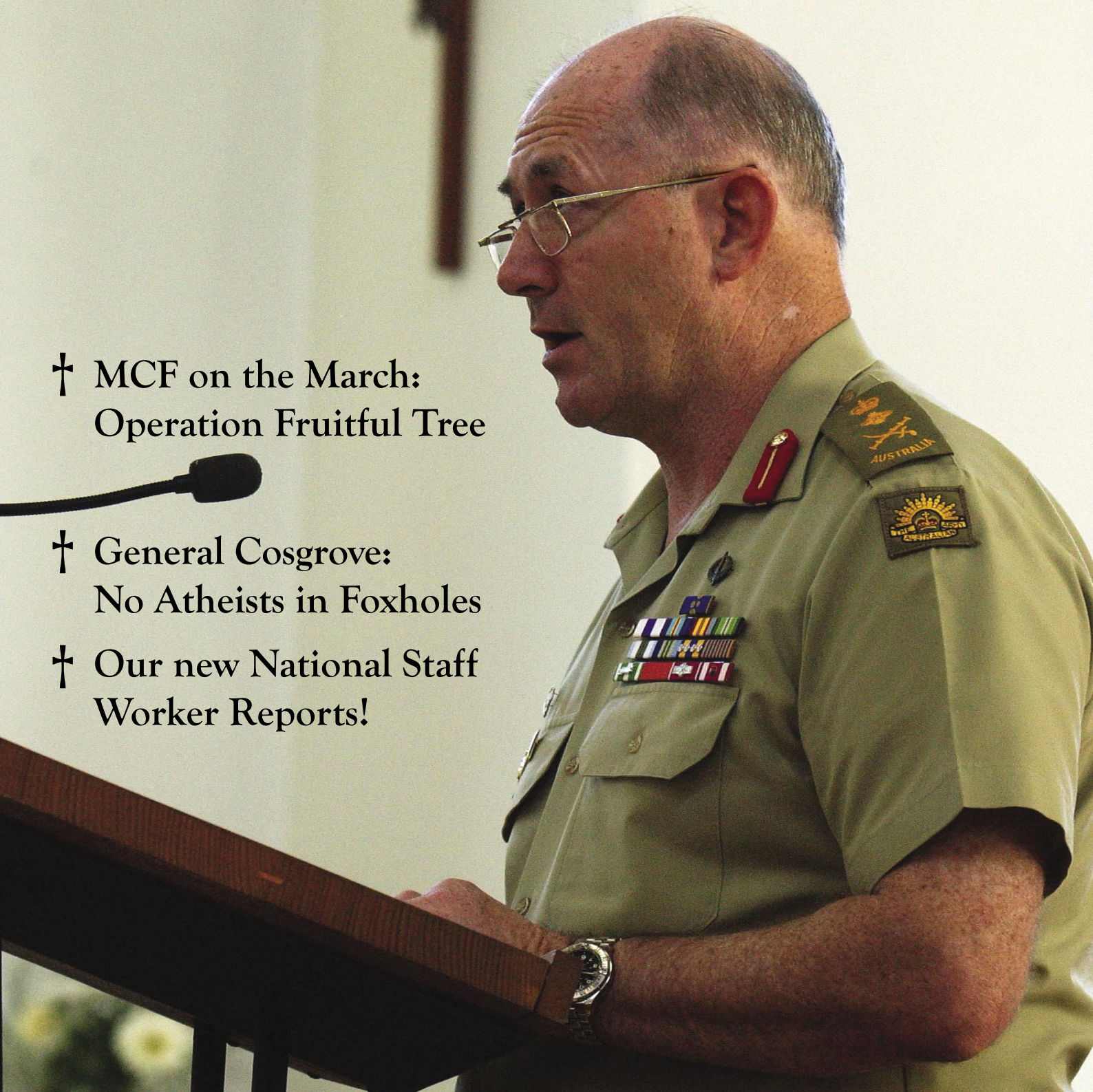
Number 10 | Easter 2005 | ISSN 1322-2511

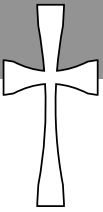
The magazine of the Military Christian Fellowship of Australia

† MCF on the March:
Operation Fruitful Tree

† General Cosgrove:
No Atheists in Foxholes

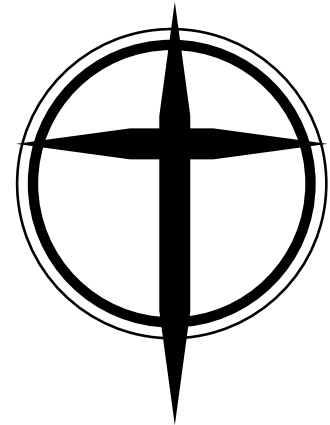
† Our new National Staff
Worker Reports!





Contents

<i>Chairman's Report</i>	1
<i>What is coming up for MCF</i>	1
<i>Military Christian Values Part One and Two</i>	2
<i>National Staff Worker SITREP</i>	4
<i>Be Effective Be Steadfast</i>	5
<i>MCF Welcomes our Latest Members</i>	6
<i>Chaplains Corner</i>	6
<i>What is MCF?</i>	7
<i>Lord, this is MCF over ...</i>	10
<i>Operation Fruitful Tree</i>	11
<i>Address by the Chief of the Defence Force, General Peter Cosgrove, AC, MC, to the National Day of Prayer Breakfast 6th December 2004</i>	12
<i>Practical Tips for Leading Small Groups</i>	14
<i>In the Next Edition of Cross Fire</i>	16
<i>Not Been to Church in a while, but got this far and want to know more about being a Christian?</i>	16
<i>Christian One-Liners</i>	17



Got a story to tell?

Send us a short story of your experiences as a Christian in the military. Highlight what God has done for you!

Articles for Cross Fire should no more than 500 words long, focus on military Christian issues and experiences, avoid denominational commentary, and will be subject to approval from the National Council before publication. Photos are encouraged and should be of maximum resolution to ensure production standard. All submissions should be in electronic format. Stories from operational service as especially encouraged.

MCF National Office Holders

Patron:

RADM Trevor Ruting, AM, CSC

Council

Chairman:

LTCOL Mick Mumford

Vice Chair:

MAJ James van Heel

Secretary:

CDR David Rose, CSM, RAN

Treasurer:

OCDT Kier Bailey

Prayer Secretary:

Mrs Helen Bielenberg

Webmaster:

LCDR Peter Ellis, RAN

MCF Office:

CP4-3-046

Department of Defence
Canberra, ACT, 2600

Australia

Tel: (02) 6266 4950

www.mcf-australia.com

MCF STAFF:

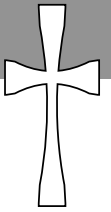
National Staff Worker:

Mr Jon Belmonte

Admin Officer:

GPCAPT (ret) Ken McPhan





Chairman's Report

It is with pleasure that the Council presents this 10th edition of Cross Fire, the first in six years. It marks the start of resurgence in MCF as we make, over the next six months, major decisions about who we are and what we do. We have a vision for MCF that sees us as the pre-eminent Christian force in the ADF, supporting believers, assisting our Chaplains, and evangelising our workmates. You can be a part of that vision by completing the survey that has shipped with this magazine. Without your input we will find it hard to not only support you, but to include what are, no doubt, valuable ideas.

In this edition we present to you the first two of six articles on Christian Values for Military Service written by our Patron and the ADF's most senior clerics. It is

no coincidence that the Defence Values mirror those of the Bible. When God writes the recipe who needs a chef?

We are coming up to our most important event on the Christian calendar - Easter. The other day I asked myself which day of the weekend is the most important at Easter. Is it the Friday since on that day our Lord died to save us? Or is it Sunday, since our Lord rose again in victory over sin and death? After some thought I realised I was on the wrong track: it is the Saturday when Jesus was actually paying for our sins that we need to remember the most. Without this day His death was in vain and His resurrection meaningless. It is too easy for us to focus on either march-in or graduation parade, and never the hard yards in-between. I hope

we all spend some time in quiet reflection this Easter considering the Saturday, when the hard work was done for all our sakes.

In His service,

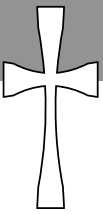
Mick Mumford



What is coming up for MCF?

- Canberra Christians Dinner
2 Sep 05
- MCF Retreat Sth NSW
21-23 Oct 05
- Forum of Christian Military Ministries at Duntroon
16 - 18 Nov 05
- MCF Annual General Meeting
Nov 05 TBC





Military Christian Values

Military Christian Values - in this first of a three part series, we discover that the Defence Values are as timeless as the Bible and a guide for Christian living.

Adherence to the Defence Values is something expected of all members of the ADF and Department of Defence. Professionalism, Integrity, Courage, Loyalty, Teamwork, and Innovation are core characteristics of the culture of Defence. It should come as no surprise to anyone that these values are also inherently Christian values. In this and the next two editions of Cross Fire MCF presents a series of articles written by our Patron and senior ADF clergy explaining why these six biblical values are not only important to our military life but essential to our Christian walk. MCF groups are encouraged to use the six essays as topics for study and discussion during meetings and study groups. Let us ask ourselves the following:

- Do we show God's glory through adherence to these values? If so, how best do we do so?
- Are there any aspects to these values that are contrary to our beliefs? How do we deal with that?
- What do we do when Christian co-workers and friends are not showcasing these values?
- What are the core values of Christian life not encompassed by the Defence Values? What can we do to reinforce these within our workplace?



Military Christian Values - Part One
By **RADM Trevor Ruting, AM, CSC**
Patron of MCF

Professionalism

One of the core Defence values is that of professionalism. In our ADF roles this may be exhibited by our demonstrated competence in our particular specialisation, our mastery of our trade or profession, being a proficient exponent of our skills, and doing our assigned job or tasks to the best of our ability.

But this value or trait is one that stems from the Word of our Lord: one that our Lord requires of us as good followers of his teachings, as Paul wrote to Timothy¹:

*"All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be **proficient**, equipped for every good work."*

While our Lord also wants us to obey our authorised rulers² he wants us to set a good example to our fellow members of the

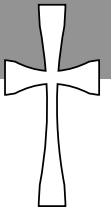
ADF *"for it is God's will that by doing good you should silence the ignorant talk of foolish men"*. One of the best ways of setting that good example is to be proficient practitioners of our particular Defence trade/profession: to continue to learn and to demonstrate the skills He has given us for our Defence roles; to try our hardest at all times. For all in leadership positions, this also means being firm but fair with our subordinates - coaching and encouraging them to increase their skills and competence.

A good example from the Old Testament of a leader who clearly demonstrated his professionalism as an example to the many living in Jerusalem at that time was Nehemiah. Having convinced his king to let him rebuild the walls and gates surrounding Jerusalem, he encouraged all the families living near the gates and wall to contribute by working on the section nearest them. The surrounding foes of Tobiah, Sanballat and Geshem tried to intimidate the Jews during the rebuilding by ridicule, anger and discouragement. But Nehemiah met each challenge through prayer to our Lord and through vigilance. Each man worked on the walls with his weapon in one hand or at his side, and Nehemiah encouraged the people to *"Remember the Lord, who is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, your daughters, your wives and your homes."*³ After the rebuilding of the wall, Nehemiah set about restoring a proper order in society including banning the nobles from exacting taxes from their brethren. Even after he was appointed Governor of Judah he

¹ 2 Timothy Ch 3 Verses 15-17 [NRSV]

² 1 Peter Ch 2 verses 13-15 [NIV]

³ Nehemiah Ch 4 Verse 14 [RSV]



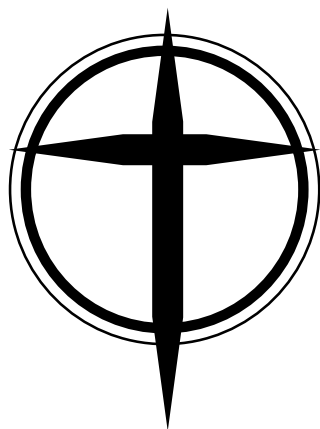
chose not to accept many of the 'spoils' previous Governors had extracted from the people as he feared the Lord. When advised to hide in the temple because his enemies were coming for him, he refused, demonstrating courage in the face of adversity.

There are very many other examples in our Lord's Word of people who clearly demonstrated the value of professionalism in the way they served their God. Romans Chapters 12 and 13 provide good advice on using your skills as do many of Paul's letters⁴: whatever your talents and employment, do it professionally to help your brothers and sisters as well as to serve our Lord through our work for our masters.

I leave you with Paul's words to Timothy⁵:

"Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs - he wants to please his commanding officer."

RADM Ruting is a currently serving Naval officer and a previous Chairman of MCF. He became Patron of MCF in November 2004



**Military Christian Values
Part Two
By Dr Tom Frame
Anglican Bishop to the ADF**

Integrity

Of all the values identified in recent times by Defence as being crucial to the health and well-being of ADF culture, integrity is the most difficult to define but the easiest to recognize. While lecturing at the New South Wales Police College several years ago I was told it was simply 'doing the right thing when no-one would ever know'. This helpfully suggests that it has to do with actions and attitudes. But it is even broader than that. On the twenty-two occasions in which the word (or a variant) appears in the Holy Scriptures, it conveys a sense of consistency, reliability and honesty. It seems to involve personal wholeness, inner harmony and the *integration* of body, mind and spirit.

The followers of Jesus are called to integrate their believing, behaving and belonging. As a function of believing that Jesus is the incarnate Son of God, the Christian belongs to the community Jesus

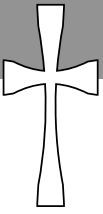
founded (the Church) where he or she behaves in a manner that reflects Jesus' teaching. Belief is strengthened through fellowship. Behaviour is shaped by belief. Belonging deepens conviction. Every part of a person's being and every aspect of a person's living is, therefore, drawn into being a disciple of Christ.

Not surprisingly, 'Christian integrity' is a distinct commodity. While it involves consistency, reliability and honesty in one's public and private conduct, and in one's professional and personal dealings, it critically involves the steady permeation of Jesus' teaching throughout the totality of one's being. This is principally a work of the Holy Spirit. It is sometimes called sanctification and it entails being made holy. Christian integrity is, then, fundamentally about holiness.

All Christians are called away from worldliness and social conformity to spiritual maturity and moral striving. In effect, to the wholehearted pursuit of holiness. This is proclaimed in the opening to St Mark's Gospel where John the Baptist calls for repentance. It pervades the Sermon on the Mount recorded in St Matthew's Gospel and is evident in the 'therefore' rhetoric of St Paul's letter to the Ephesians. Here the apostle writes: 'I therefore, as a prisoner of the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called ... Therefore, putting away falsehood, let everyone speak the truth ... Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children'. The demands grow intrinsically out of the action of God in Christ. The first epistle attributed to Saint

⁴ especially Paul's letters to the Corinthians and Ephesians

⁵ 2 Timothy Ch 2 Verses 3-4 [NIV]



Peter echoes the Ephesian letter: 'As obedient children, do not be conformed to the passions of your former ignorance, but as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; since it is written: 'You shall be holy, for I am holy'. The royal priesthood image in the epistle intensifies this theme: 'But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, that you may declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light'. To belong to God is to be holy; to be a recipient of God's power is to be holy. The church is holy because it is God's creation and the recipient of his covenant of faithfulness.

The call to holy conduct is a call to complete unity with God. Holiness is not first of all a matter of morals: but it does include a moral aspect. Moral purity belongs to holiness because belonging to God transforms life. Holiness is not first of all something done by human beings, whether inside or outside the church. Holy people do not

make the church holy. People do holy actions because they belong to God. Election by God makes the Christian holy.

The call to holiness has a direct bearing on the conduct of uniformed men and women. In addition to the ever-present peril of imbibing the standards of this world and the wisdom of our age, Christian servicemen and women face the threat of being captured by the less laudable aspects of Defence culture and being tamed, warped or mutated by agendas and activities that have little to do with Christian mission and ministry. It is possible in the midst of great change and a heightened operational tempo for Christians to be overwhelmed by what might be good for the Defence Force at the expense of what might be needful in proclaiming the coming Kingdom of God. This is all quite apart from everyday things, like drugs, alcohol and pornography, which have the potential to damage our personality and corrode our soul.

When Christians speak of integrity, they have in mind the alignment

of a person's body, mind and spirit with Jesus Christ, and thoughts, words and deeds that resonate with his teaching. In addition to becoming more Christ-like, a commitment to Christian integrity ensures that the believer is always and everywhere an ambassador of Jesus Christ pointing to the coming Kingdom of God. The ADF needs people who possess this kind of integrity.

Dr Tom Frame is the Anglican Bishop to the ADF. A former Naval officer he is a writer and commentator on Christian issues and most recently published "Living by the Sword? The Ethics of Armed Intervention".

Parts Three and Four in the next edition of Cross Fire



National Staff Worker SITREP

Brothers and Sisters in Christ. Welcome to Cross Fire and greetings from your National Staff Worker. I am looking forward to what God has planned for MCF in 2005. We are going to see a growth in MCF this year, it may be slow at the start but once we get some momentum behind us things will become easier. That doesn't mean we can stop striving for the Lord locally, it just means we will have others to help. Some of us are creatures of habit and I know that some may not like the changes that are coming; but just like the tree, MCF does

require pruning and fertilising to reinvigorate.

God had planted this tree (MCF) and as stewards of His garden, we must endeavour to do our very best to nurture and grow the tree so that it bears forth a prosperous crop. We must:

- **Fertilise:** by being more prominent and active
- **Water:** we will water the tree in prayer.
- **Prune:** by God's direction and with assistance of the membership we will prune the

tree of unproductive activities leaving productive branches.

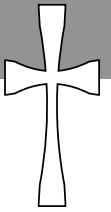
- **Fruit:** to be offered to the glory of God.

I am looking forward to assisting and working with you all in the furtherance of God's kingdom. Please keep MCF, the Council, and myself in your prayers as we venture the road with God.

STAND FAST in the knowledge of God.

*Jon Belmonte
National Staff Worker*





Be Effective Be Steadfast

By Rev Colonel Peter Rose (rtd)

I have deliberately chosen this day, 29 January 2005, to write to my fellow Christians in the Military Christian Fellowship of Australia. MCF's General Prayer Calendar for the 29th day of the month (visit www.mcf-australia.com to verify this) invites this prayer:

"We praise you, Father, for members who have moved on to, or who are training for, ordained ministry. May they be taught and may they learn the truth, and may they proclaim it powerfully and fearlessly. Strengthen them that they will be effective in their ministries, and steadfast in their walk with you."

This prayer for members "who have moved on to ordained ministry" now has a significance for me that I could not have imagined even six months ago. Firstly, I am now one of those ordained clergy whose ministry focuses on the servicemen and women of Australia. Secondly, as a recently-ordained deacon in the Anglican church, I serve as Chaplain to the Bishop to the Defence Force, Bishop Tom Frame, himself once an officer of the RAN. In my new capacity, my responsibilities include mentoring ADF members who, in the words of the prayer cited above, "are training for ordained ministry" through the in-service training scheme.

As I reflect on the witness of hundreds of Christian servicemen and women, I regard with awe their achievements, their commitment, and their courage. Their examples testify to the amazing work of Almighty God, who calls faithful people from all walks of life, including from the armed forces, to love and serve Him and to love and serve our neighbours.

There is another matter that lends significance to this date: it was on this day, 40 years ago, that I enlisted in the Australian Army, and commenced full time service as a Staff Cadet at the Royal Military College (RMC) Duntroon. For almost 30 years I remained in uniform. For the final 12 of those years, and continuously since then, I have known the joy of being a member of the Kingdom of God.

40 years ago I first met Dennis Johnson, then the Anglican Chaplain at RMC. Prior to his ordination, Dennis had seen active service as a soldier in the 2nd AIF, including as a "Rat" of Tobruk. Dennis's successor at RMC, Chaplain Les Thomson (who married Marion and me in 1970) also had prior army service. Graduates from RMC and the Officer Cadet School also have committed their lives to ordained ministry. Russell Bielenberg, a captain on the staff of RMC in the mid-sixties and now an Anglican priest, has worked for decades with MCF and ACCTS. Gary Stone, a Roman Catholic deacon, has served as an ADF Chaplain. Rob Sutherland is currently Anglican Chaplain at Duntroon.

In focusing on the prayer for the 29th of the month, I do not overlook the diverse ways in which lay ex-servicemen and women are reaching the next generation in the ADF with the gospel of Jesus. Mike Hanlon (with FOCUS at ADEFA) and Ken McPhan (in our own MCF office) readily come to mind.

Many from Australia's armed services now minister in the wider community. While working with World Vision, I encountered amongst its staff several who had left the Army to serve the poor through that Christian organisation. Other ministries benefit from people with notable

MCF associations (I think of Jim Wallace in the Australian Christian Lobby, and Warren Rout in Christian radio broadcasting). Many ex-service personnel are in positions of leadership in their own churches. Space limitations and my own lack of knowledge prevent my naming many others who have served their nation loyally in the ADF, and have gone on to serve their Lord faithfully in some other ministry.

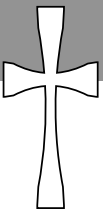
When I wrote for Crossfire in 1998 about my "Journey to the Edge of the Map", I was looking towards an opportunity to be an ambassador for Christ in World Vision. Now I look forward to a new opportunity to serve Christ, through supporting and serving Defence Force Chaplaincy.

As I wonder at the path that the Lord has caused me to walk to this date, I recall the words of the prophet Jeremiah (29:11): "For I know the plans I have for you, says the LORD, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope."

It is my earnest prayer that you, as members of MCF, will accept the lordship of Jesus over all aspects of your lives, and that you will seek to serve him in all you undertake. I pray that your sense of purpose will be derived from His plans for you and His call on your energies and talents. I look forward to a future where the ADF is the source of even greater blessings than it is now, through its loyal servants of Jesus, and through its past members who continue to exercise a Christian ministry to our fellow Australians.

Rev Colonel Peter Rose transferred to the Inactive Reserve in 1994 after a career in the Royal Australian Engineers. He was Chairman of the Nation Council of MCF in 1990 - 1993. He is an ordained Deacon and is the Chaplain to the Anglican Bishop to the ADF.





MCF Welcomes our Latest Members

AMBERLEY

CPL Stephen Trippett, 38 Sqn
SGT Craig Cornish, 382ECSS

CANBERRA (ADFA)

OCDT Kier Bailey, 1 Div

CANBERRA (Campbell Park)

Mr Stephen Gadsby, CP2-2-44
MAJ Stephen Evans, CP3-7-140

CANBERRA (RMC)

CAPT Adrian Bielenberg, II Class
Instructor

EDINBURGH

SGT Paul Gore, MPSP0
FLTLT Grant Harvey, 1AFDS

GLENBROOK

FLGOFF Rebecca Olsen, HQAC

HMAS ALBATROSS

Mr Jonathan Laird, Ground Radio
Section

HMAS HARMAN

CPL Brian Paul, 28 Sqn

HOLSWORTHY

LT Ricky Su, 1 HSB

MELBOURNE AREA

CAPT Daniel Yates, DPM-3, LEA
WO1 Philip Thamm, Simpson
Barracks

NOWRA

Mrs Gill Lea, North Nowra

SYDNEY AREA

LTCOL Don Shearman, HQ TC-A

TOWNSVILLE (Jezzine Barracks)

CAPT Tim StQuintin, 35 Fd Sqn

TOWNSVILLE (RAAF)

Chap Allen Neil

Chaplain's Corner



From PCHAP Eric Burton

If you ever happen to be around a Naval ship or establishment just before 0800 on any weekday or weekend, you will observe a time honoured ritual called colours. One of the junior sailors will inform the Office of the Day "one minute to 8 o'clock sir" "Very Well" will be the reply. Then "8 o'clock sir" to which comes the reply "Make it so". At that order one sailor will sound he still on bosun's whistle, another will sound 8 bells on the nearby ships bell and the ensigns are raised. All on the upper decks or around the ship will come to attention and face aft. All in all it is the signal for another day of work to begin. The ceremony around the beginning of each day is a reminder of the calling of officers and sailors of a navy that *makes is so* for another day - some willingly; others far more reluctantly.

As Christians Defence Force we *can make it so* in a different way - every day. Just think of this! CS Lewis commented that every day the demanding dogs barked in his ear as he woke up. They barked about the demands of the day, reminded him of his inadequacies and the problem relationships. Lewis found that he had to stave off the demanding dogs and remind himself of the **real** situation. And what was that? Well simply that as someone who was in the family

of God - through Jesus' death and resurrection - he was a precious child of God, that he had a future and a hope. That nothing was going to happen that was outside God's will for him. That he was to face the day confidently as God's representative.

So in this Easter season - how do you face the day? Allowing the demanding dogs to set the pattern or do you **make it so** by reminding yourself of the things that really matter at the start of each day? Your relationship with God, his love for you - your call to serve him; just for today.

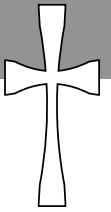
Practically speaking, you can set the pattern for **making it so** by ensuring that you build into the routine of the day a daily prayer and bible reading. Over the years of steady practice my wife Lynda and I know that there is no other way to push away the incessant demands of our own natures and sometimes the demands of others than by centring on the will of God. We do that by setting aside about 25 minutes each day - for us morning works best. We use the *Everyday with Jesus* notes a booklet called the *lectionary* which gets us reading the complete bible in small chunks over three years.

I can think of no other encouragement I can better give to the readers of Crossfire than to take control of your day by giving control to God each day and *making it so*.

Wishing you and your families a very fulfilled Easter as together we thank God the Father for his love for us through our Lord Jesus Christ and the Power of the Holy Spirit.

PCHAP Burton is an Anglican Chaplain in the RAN and is the Chaplain's Representative to MCF.





What is MCF?

Introduction

The Australian Defence Force requires members who are physically, mentally and spiritually mature. In times of changing values, when moral and ethical norms are being continually challenged, the Military Christian Fellowship of Australia (MCFA) can help Service personnel to strengthen their spiritual maturity and provide opportunities for fellowship and united witness.

The MCF is an interdenominational fellowship of all ranks from the three Services and civilians associated with Defence who desire:

- To live Christian lives to the glory of God.
- To extend the cause of Jesus Christ in an through the Australian Defence Force (ADF).
- To support and encourage one another in these ventures.

What is the history of MCF ?

In 1851 Captain Trotter, of the British Army, wrote from India to his Christian friends in England seeking prayer support for himself and his fellow officers so that they might perform their military duties more effectively and be faithful in demonstrating their Christian faith. From this grew the Officers' Christian Union. Through friendships with those of other nations similar fellowships developed; and their number continues to grow to this day. An Australian Officers' Christian Fellowship was formed in Sydney in 1959, and in 1973 the Australian Services Christian Fellowship was formed to cater for all ranks. In 1984 the two organizations amalgamated to form the present MCF-A. MCF-A is a member of the world wide Association of Military Christian Fellowships (AMCF).

How does MCF function?

The basic component of MCF is the local unit or area fellowship group formed to help members of the Services to live fulfilled and effective Christian lives in the military environment. The groups are self-controlled and may be all ranks, officer, or other rank in composition as the needs and wishes of the members dictate. The MCF Council exists

to provide assistance and resources as needed as well as a link with the worldwide fellowship. Salaried workers are employed to provide ministry and administrative support to members. The Staff Worker visits Service establishments and groups nationally. MCF is financed by members' donations to cover the costs of the activities of staff and literature.

Conferences are held, providing opportunities for members from around the country to meet, to exchange ideas, enjoy fellowship and obtain teaching relevant to Christians in the military. Regional seminars and other activities may also be arranged from time to time.

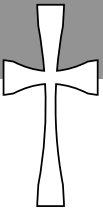
What are the objectives of MCF?

The objectives of MCF are:

- To build up individual members to spiritual maturity in their walk with God, family and associates. m To stimulate and encourage members to meet together regularly for Bible study, prayer and fellowship. M To stimulate and encourage members to give witness to their faith in work, deed and active support for the church of their own denomination. w To be an instrument through which others in the ADF are led to commit their lives to Christ.
- To support actively the ministry of ADF Chaplains. In addition to stimulating and encouraging individual members, the Fellowship also helps to organize local, regional and national activities which further the MCF objectives. Prayer is recognized as a vital means through which a widespread organization, subject to the contingencies of Service life, can nurture its corporate life. Members are encouraged to pray regularly for each other, the staff and the Council.

Who controls MCF ?

MCF is governed by an elected representative Council consisting of up to twelve persons. Members include a Chaplain and representatives from the three Services.



How does MCF relate to service Chaplains?

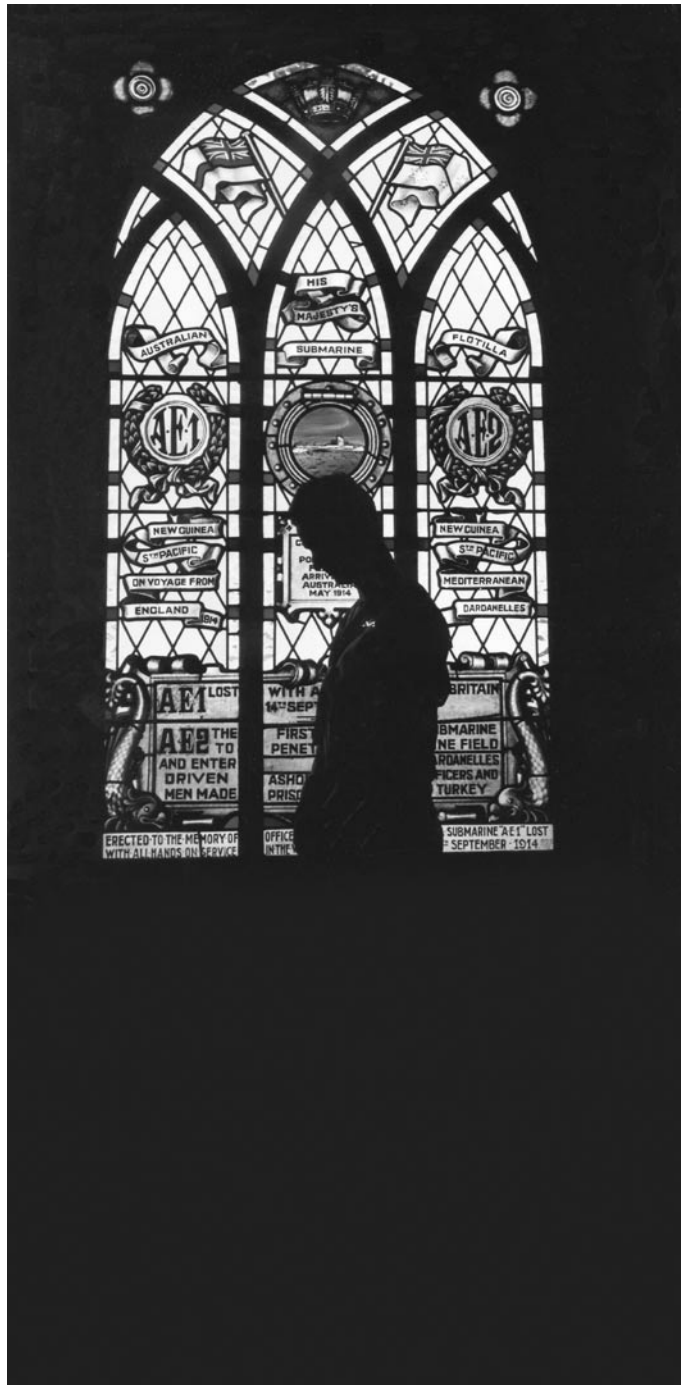
MCF seeks to assist Chaplains in their work and to encourage and co-operate with them in every way. It complements their ministry by seeking to contact ADF members who would not normally be involved in chapel or church activities. A close relationship with Chaplains is sought at all levels.

Who can join MCF ?

Ordinary Membership is open to all serving and retired members of the ADF; accredited Philanthropic Representatives; Government employees associated with the ADF; members and former members of the armed forces of other nations now residing in Australia; and their spouses.

Associate Membership is open to all other persons who express an interest in MCF. They are included in the mailing list and receive MCF literature. (Associate Members are unable to vote or to be elected to the Council).

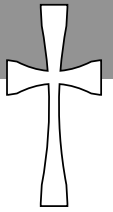
Joining: If you want to encourage other Christians in the ADF and work in fellowship with others to make Christ known within the ADF join the Military Christian Fellowship. You can become a member of MCF-A by filling out the attached form and signing the statements of belief. Send the forms to the MCF-A Office. You can get more information from the MCF-A Office (admin@mcf-australia.com) and from the MCF Australia web site at: www.mcf-australia.com



Military Christian Fellowship of Australia

Campbell Park Offices, CP4-3-046,
Canberra, ACT, 2600

Tel: 02 6266 4948 Fax: 06 266 4378
email: admin@mcf-australia.com
www.mcf-australia.com



Military Christian Fellowship Of Australia - Membership Application

Personal Details: Return to: Dept of Defence, MCF Australia, CP4-3-046, Campbell Park Offices, Canberra, ACT, 2600

Rank _____ Name _____ (First) _____ (Surname) _____ Employee ID _____

Spouse's Name _____

Other Address _____

Mailing Address (preferably a Defence address) _____

(Suburb) _____ (State) _____ (Postcode) _____

(Suburb) _____ (State) _____ (Postcode) _____

(Country - if not Australia) _____

(Country - if not Australia) _____

Tel: () _____

Tel: () _____

Email: _____

Email: _____

Please tick appropriate boxes and provide relevant information

I apply for

Ordinary Membership

Associate Membership

Inclusion on the mailing list

I am

I am the spouse of _____

a serving member of the ADF (Service: _____)

a retired member of the ADF (Service: _____)
(Date: ____ / ____ / ____)

a member of a philanthropic organisation (_____)

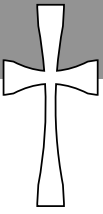
a Government employee/contractor associated with the ADF

a serving member of a foreign armed force, living in Australia
(Date: ____ / ____ / ____)

Sign here

Signature

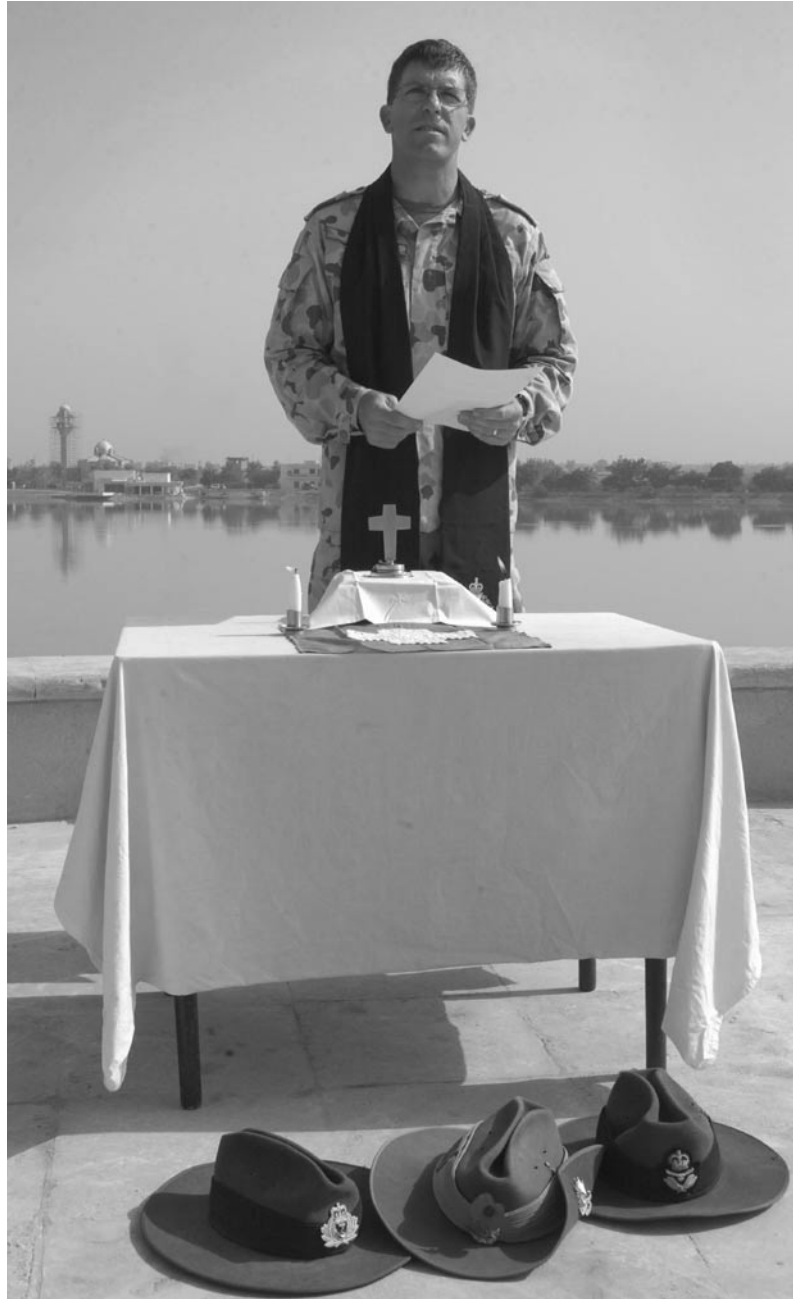
Date



Lord, this is MCF over ...

Prayer points from the MCF Prayer Secretary, Helen Bielenberg

1. Praise God for MCF and it's work in making Christ known in the military community.
2. Pray for our new National Staff Worker, Jon Belmonte, and for networking with the Council and Area Reps.
3. Pray for MCF members to be strong and faithful at home and at work.
4. Pray for health and safety of our deployed troops and that we can care for them and their families.
5. Pray for the continued development of small faithful prayer groups.
6. Pray for success with the MCF Retreat in October 2005.
7. Pray for Helen and Russel Bielenberg as they go on mission with ACCTS to several countries around the world over the next five months, especially Spain.



MCF Mugs and Lapel Pins

Make a statement with these signature items from MCF

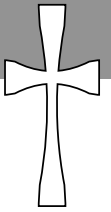
**Available from: MCF-A, CP4-3-061,
Department of Defence, Canberra
ACT 2600 Australia**



\$10.00



\$5.00



Operation Fruitful Tree

When military forces embark upon important missions a code name is always given to the task. In the past these names were used as part of deception or security reasons like Operation Overlord for the invasion of Normandy in WWII. Now they more often than not used to portray a sense of the mission itself, like Operation Sumatra Assist or Operation Iraqi Freedom. So what is Operation Fruitful Tree? In Matthew Chapter 21 Jesus looked for fruit from a fig tree and, finding it bare, he withered it. What would MCF rather be, a withered fig tree or a fruitful, abundant planting of the Lord? The ADF has changed significantly since MCF came into being in the early 80s and yet MCF has not. We have the opportunity now to build on the work of the MCF in recent years, such as the Deployment Packs that many of you will have seen, used, and enjoyed. MCF may have to change in order to grow and it will certainly have to

become more dynamic. At a national level it would seem plain - MCF needs to be in the business of supporting our core activity. The hard question though, is, "What is MCF's core activity?" Is it evangelism, prayer support, bible studies, networking, Chaplaincy support, operational deployments? Is it all of the above in varying degrees? Are we doing enough or not enough? It could be that significant change is necessary both in our operations and our focus of ministry.

The process of discovering, planning and implementing MCF's resurgence is to be called Operation Fruitful Tree. MCF will answer two important questions by mid 2005: "What do our members need and what does God require?" Once we have determined these two basic questions then Council will develop a plan and produce "orders" for MCF's resurgence as a vibrant ministry within the ADF. In the meantime we will return to some of the activities of MCF that

have been most appreciated in the past: Cross Fire magazine, Staff Worker visits to bases, and an MCF retreat to nourish our Christian walk in the military.

I ask all MCF members to engage Council as we determine God's plan for the ministry. Tell us what you need to be more effective Christians. Tell us what it is you value about MCF and what you find hard to understand. Tell us what we do well and what we do poorly. Participate in the survey issued with this edition of Cross Fire. Finally, I ask that you pray specifically for MCF, pray for your National Council, pray for the Chaplains of the ADF, and pray for your unsaved workmates.

It is our honour to serve the Lord in the ADF. Are we good enough to meet the opportunities God has given us?

Mick Mumford
Chairman



Details Changed? Tell the Office!

Copy, fill out and return to: Military Christian Fellowship of Australia
CP4-3-046 (Fax: 02 6266 2530)
Department of Defence, CANBERRA ACT 2600

Personal Details: *(please complete the first line and any other details that may have changed).*

Rank: _____ Name: _____ Employee ID: _____

Home Address: _____

Spouse's Name: _____

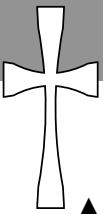
Mailing Address (preferably a Defence Address): _____

Suburb: _____ State: _____ Postcode: _____ Country: _____

Telephone (w): _____ Telephone (h): _____

Email(w): _____ Email (h): _____

Signature: _____



Address by the Chief of the Defence Force, General Peter Cosgrove, AC, MC, to the National Day of Prayer Breakfast 6th December 2004



I have been in this great hall many times over the last few years. Some visits have been moments of national celebration and rejoicing. Some have been occasions of sorrow and condolence and re-affirmation. All have embodied a sense of community, just as this morning invokes a sense of community, a sense of sharing. Many of you here today will recall some of those other occasions of recent years—after the return of INTERFET, after 9/11, after Bali. Great public occasions when as a community representative of a Nation, we came to declare our common spirit, our resolve and our faith. On every one of those occasions I have been very proud to represent the men and women of the Australian Defence Force, that special part of Australian society. The extraordinary contract which we in the military embrace as a fundamental, which we constantly attempt, renew and exploit, and in which we often succeed and sometimes fail, is that between a leader and his or her team. At first blush, many would think that the contract was underpinned by legal authority, conferred by the laws of the land. At first blush they would be right, but the true strength of the contract lies much deeper than that. The true strength of the contract lies in the quality of the relationship between the leader and his or her men and women. The character of the leader is fundamental to the relationship—the integrity, courage, humility, compassion and energy of the leader are all essential ingredients. But if I had to sum up in one word what it was that made

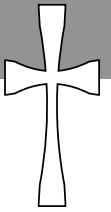
our people so successful when the chips are down and the stakes and at their highest, it would be faith. Faith can take many different forms. In its more prosaic forms it's the outcome of loyalty. In the military it is the absolute currency of our community life.

Faith exists in our men and women on several different planes. First is the faith or trust they have in each other and in their leaders. This is fundamental to their ability to endure and to perform very difficult tasks well under great pressure. Secondly, our men and women must have faith in the value and the rightness of their mission. This goes to the core of their service. To them Australia is a land, a home and an ideal. It is a continent of great antiquity, a nation of great and admired values, a society of generosity and fairness and courage. The faith that our men and women hold hard to, is that their missions and their actions will be worthy of this ideal. Just as they are the shrewd arbiters of the trust they place in each other and in their leaders, so they rely on the great collective wisdom of the Australian people to judge their missions and their performance. Very rarely does this judgement falter.

And finally, in that laconic, reluctant, even shy way of Australians, they would tell you of their wish for, their fervent hope in, their prayer, amounting to their faith in a higher being, in their God. And when you consider what it is we want and need them to do on so many occasions, we should not be surprised at this conviction of a Maker who watches

over them and their loved ones and their Communities and their Nation, and all of humanity—even those who wish us ill—of a Maker to whom at times of great danger and quiet contemplation they repair their souls and entrust their future. There is an old saying with which many of you will be familiar, 'there are no atheists in foxholes.'

This comes from one of the great World Wars of our troubled past and continues to have great relevance to the men and women we send in harm's way today. At times when the question of their own mortality is writ large in their minds, their thoughts will turn to that axiom of faith for us all, the conviction that there is a higher direction, purpose and safeguard to our existence. I have had nearly 40 years of service and I know that this still holds as true today as ever it did in earlier times. In the trilogy of faiths I have outlined, there is no doubt that this last, this belief and trust in, and love for, our Maker is the deepest and most profound because it goes to the fundamental worth of each man and woman as a creature of spirit. Of course at every moment that I speak of these men and women in uniform I am actually speaking of typical Australians whose values we all equally prize and equally share. A fundamental aspect of Australian society is the diversity and difference of its people. Our communities are made up of individuals from a variety of backgrounds, cultures, religions and life circumstances. To effectively and harmoniously live together we need to believe that



our similarities are stronger than our differences. The challenge is to find our shared values. And I do believe that at the heart of our Australian community there is a solid core of vital, accepted values. We have a spirit of generosity that is indicative of our compassionate nature. This generosity makes instinctive the action of extending a helping hand here or to our neighbours overseas.

Springing to mind immediately are two simple, yet extremely powerful examples.

First there is the example of the people of the town and shire of Moorah in Western Australia, honoured in this hall three years ago by all of us to mark the sheer guts those marvellous people showed in climbing back off the floor on three separate occasions when the town and district were flattened by floods. Once is remarkable-but in Australia hardly unique. Three times in short order beggars belief. What a community!

The second example is in the reaction of our people after Bali, when a nation rolled up its sleeves, full of determination, sorrow and outrage, all tinged with pride for the actions of so many in the aftermath. In the midst of tragedy, there was then an observable greatness in being an Australian. Every Australian value was so clearly affirmed in these challenges, none more so than our open hearts and strong hands. This is a generosity of spirit that makes our society inclusive yet welcoming of diversity. It is a generosity that makes us strive for unity in society-but only when dignity and equity accompany it. It is what we Australians cryptically and inevitably refer to as 'a fair go'. We believe we have a fundamental responsibility to each other, starting with our family and

extending endlessly through our society. This spirit of generosity may not be uniquely Australian but to me it is the bedrock of our character. It characterises the most ancient part of our society and it is what attracts the newest members to our shore. That military characteristic of trust that I mentioned earlier is merely of course an echo of a great Australian value. Trusting human nature and trusting people is for us an automatic choice. It is fundamental to the relationships between the members of our community and allows us to rely on and learn from each other. The smooth functioning of our society depends and thrives on this.

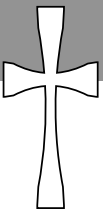
We also understand the need to have a determined purpose to live our lives peacefully, healthily, enjoyably and productively. This determination instils in us a sense of responsibility, of accountability, a need to protect and nurture the present. For Australians, there are some challenges and affronts which cannot be encouraged and which must be prevented or redirected-not casually or joyfully, not without risk or damage to the human spirit, but for the greater good. At the end, as the Chief of our Defence Force, I acknowledge that it is in recognition of this,

that Australians grudgingly give up the treasure of their youth to their armed forces. I am proud to be here today to share with you the faith I hold in the values of our Australian community and to affirm our faith in God. These values overwhelm all material things in our lives and our futures. They are at the core of our society. And they will help us through all the days of our lives. In this hall of eminent Australian men and women, we gather today to affirm that living those values is the greatest service we can offer with our time on earth. Today, understandably, I have founded my remarks on the men and women who wear Australia's military colours. They rest their lives, their safety and their sense of worth on three great faiths.

The trust they have in their comrades, the belief they have in their nation, and the faith they have in their God.

I ask you as we pray for all Australians and all of mankind, to turn your thoughts and prayers today also to those Australian sons and daughters currently serving overseas and to their families waiting for their safe return. May God watch over them and bring them safely home.





Practical Tips for Leading Small Groups

Start and end on time.

Starting on time will establish a practice of people coming on time.

If your group is young in the faith, consider having multiple copies of the same translation of the Bible.

This allows you to refer to passages by page number for those not familiar with the Bible.

Avoid praying or reading around in a circle.

Take volunteers for these tasks rather than risk losing someone because they felt pressure to read or pray. If you detect an unplanned pattern of going from person to person, jump in and break the pattern.

Seek to involve everyone in the interaction.

If one or two people are monopolizing the responses, you will need to stop this. Rather than specifically calling on a person, generically ask for responses by those who have not had a chance to say anything. If this practice continues week after week, you should plan to approach the

offending party and let them know you appreciate their participation but ask them to be sensitive to your goal of involving others.

Don't call on specific people to respond.

While you may be confident that some people wouldn't mind you specifically asking them, others might be apprehensive that you could do the same to them.

Don't allow yourself to become the group guru.

Likewise, don't allow people to view participating Chaplains as the guru. They will appreciate it.

Don't accept a wrong answer for fear of offending.

If there is a wrong response, you can ask the person to state the verse or phrase that prompted their response. You can also ask others if they agree or if they understand it differently. If a person often gives a wrong answer and you need to have it corrected, look for an opportunity to affirm them when they give a correct answer.

Don't allow statements that denigrate another denomination.

The study is intended to be a Bible Study, not a justification of one church doctrine over another.

Be alert to the use of Christian/church-ese.

It doesn't take long for people to invent or use a word or phrase that becomes an "in" expression.

Stick with the text being studied. Draw the study to a conclusion.

That is, don't quit without some sort of summation. Discovering a bunch of interesting facts does not constitute a good study.

Don't forget to do "application praying."

This helps draw the study to a proper conclusion. Don't be troubled if it takes a few weeks to get everyone into the pattern of doing this.

Structure the small group so that you encourage growth/the incorporation of new people.

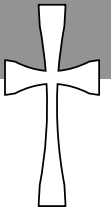
Have natural entry points if the topic is lengthy and will involve a number of weeks. Make sure newcomers feel welcome. Look for ways to involve them in the group early on, such as inquiring if they would want to open their home for a study or bring refreshments.

Negate any rank issue.

Allow familiar forms of address and encourage all to participate regardless of the rank differences in the group. Ensure that the highest rank doesn't end up "holding court" by asking questions of other members.

Adapted from OCF's (USA) "Leading Effective Small Groups" available in full at the MCF website.





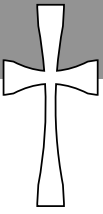
Who pays for MCF Australia?

MCF is funded by free-will donations from its members and members of the public. Donations can be sent to the MCF office: MCF-A Department of Defence Campbell Park Offices, CP4-3-046 Canberra, ACT, 2600 Australia ADF members can make allotments to MCF (allotee number 122), or funds can be transferred directly from your bank account to the MCF account with DEFCREDIT (BSB 803205, Member 66126). Your contribution will help support the work of MCF within the Australian Defence Force.



**Heavenly Father,
We thank you
that the blood of Jesus Christ
cleanses from all sin.
Bless the service men and women
of all nations and grant that we
who know the joy of being
all one in Christ Jesus
may be filled with your love
and pass it on to others
until his coming again.
Amen**

www.mcf-australia.com



In the next edition of Cross Fire:

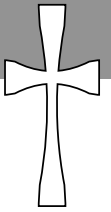
- Parts three and four of Christian Military Values
- Christian leadership for senior officers
- Are you prepared for battle? Tactics, techniques, and procedures from Mary and Zechariah!
- International Military Ministry in action: Korea 2004
- D-Day to Deliverance — A Normandy Veteran's Journey



Not been to church in a while, but got this far and want to know more about being a Christian?

It may surprise you to know that it is not about being religious. "Religious" just means doing something regularly. You can religiously go to happy hours in the Mess for instance. Some people even think being a Christian is a "racial" thing like being of European or Asian heritage. Rather Christianity is about a personal relationship with the maker of our Universe through His son Jesus. It is about admitting we are not good enough to live in this world let alone the next and seeking God's mercy so that we can. The bible tells us that we need only knock on the door of the Lord and He will open it. How do you do this? Go and see a Chaplain. Walk up to him or her and say, "Hey Padre, I was reading the MCF magazine yesterday and was hoping you could tell me a bit about this Christian thing." Or go and see someone you know practises their Christian faith, perhaps the person you borrowed this magazine from. If all else fails call the MCF Staff Worker! But whatever you do don't wait until it is too late. In the movie "Gladiator" Russell Crowe says, "What we do life echoes in eternity." Christians would say "Who you know in life (Jesus) determines your eternity."





Christian One-Liners



- *Don't let your worries get the best of you. Remember, Moses started out as a basket case.*
- *Some people are kind, polite, and sweet-spirited - until you try to sit in their pews.*
- *Many folks want to serve God, but only as advisers.*
- *It is easier to preach ten sermons than it is to live one.*
- *The good Lord didn't create anything without a purpose, but mosquitoes and sand gnats come close.*
- *When you get to your wit's end, you'll find God lives there.*
- *People are funny; they want the front of the bus, the middle of the road, and the back of the church.*
- *Opportunity may knock once, but temptation bangs on your front door forever.*
- *Quit griping about your church; if it was perfect, you couldn't belong.*
- *If the church wants a better pastor, it only needs to pray for the one it has.*
- *God Himself does not propose to judge a man until he is dead. So why should you?*
- *I don't know why some people change churches; what difference does it make which one you stay home from?*
- *A lot of church members who are singing "Standing on the Promises" are just sitting on the premises.*
- *We were called to be witnesses, not lawyers or judges.*
- *Be ye fishers of men. You catch them - He'll clean them.*
- *Coincidence is when God chooses to remain anonymous.*
- *Don't put a question mark where God put a period.*
- *Don't wait for 6 strong men to take you to church.*
- *Forbidden fruits create many jams.*
- *God doesn't call the qualified, He qualifies the called.*
- *God loves everyone, but probably prefers "fruits of the spirit" over "religious nuts!"*
- *God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage.*
- *If God is your Copilot - swap seats!*
- *The Will of God will never take you to where the Grace of God will not protect you.*
- *We don't change the message, the message changes us.*
- *The best mathematical equation ever: 1 cross + 3 nails = 4 given.*



Wherever you are...



Army Chaplains
a force for hope