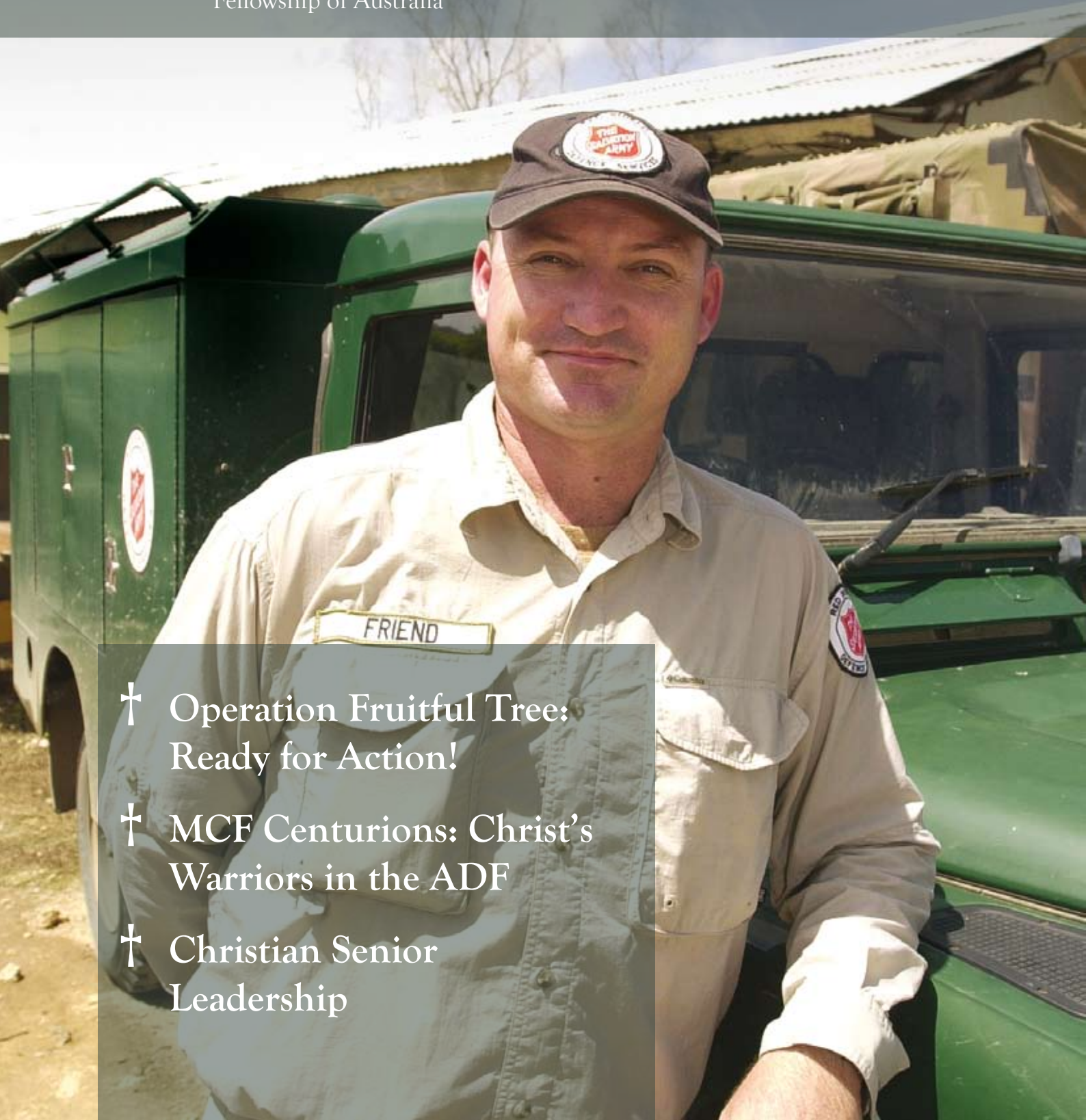




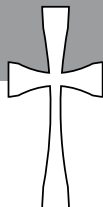
CROSS FIRE

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The magazine of the Military Christian Fellowship of Australia

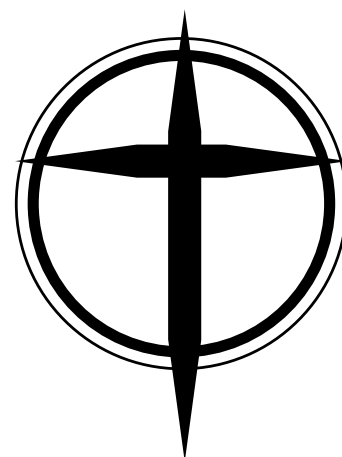


- † Operation Fruitful Tree: Ready for Action!
- † MCF Centurions: Christ's Warriors in the ADF
- † Christian Senior Leadership



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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 be 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 are especially encouraged.

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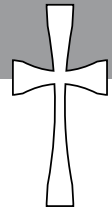
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Chairman's Report



MCF has had a big year. 2005 has seen the resurrection of this magazine, we have surveyed our members and ADF Chaplains, Jon Belmonte our National Staff Worker has visited bases from South Australia to northern NSW, our membership has increased, and our finances are strengthening. More importantly we have devised a plan, Operation Fruitful Tree, that will see MCF realise its long term vision that by 2010 all military Christians in the ADF will be encouraged and equipped by MCF to both practice their faith and effectively witness, in a military context, to their non-believing workmates. At the MCF Annual General Meeting on the 17th of November the members endorsed the plan and the new Constitution that will make the plan possible. The National Council has built upon the strength of 2005 and is looking forward to serving the members in an even greater capacity in 2006. It is an exciting time; we are privileged to have a role in it.

In 2002 I had the rather moving experience of visiting "ground zero" at the World Trade Centre in New York. At that stage the

area had been cleared and most of the buildings that needed to be demolished had been removed. My group, a mismatch of officers from 26 different countries, drove passed an old 18th century Episcopal church near the centre of ground zero. I snapped a rather fuzzy photo of this church, its fences covered in patriotic banners and messages of grief, recognisable only because of the spire and many graves crammed into its grounds. Our guide advised us that it had been untouched by the tragedy, despite the fact that the skyscraper on one side collapsed and the building on the other side had been demolished as it was too damaged to be repaired. And yet this little church miraculously remained and had become a central point for rescue efforts, grief and healing. The guide went on to conjecture that God must have wanted to spare the church since it was on Holy ground, but it struck me that God wasn't just being sentimental; He saved that church because it had a role to play, a very big role, in the days after. Indeed just recently that church welcomed its two millionth visitor since the attack.

Congratulations!

Congratulations to the following MCF members:

Awards:

MAJ Scott Watkins, for the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross in Iraq

Promotions:

Katie Chapman, graduated from RMC, to LT

LTCOL James van Heel

CAPT Michael Houghton, RAN

Increasing the flock:

CMDR David and Helen Rose, for the birth of baby Bethany.

LTCOL James and Jo van Heel, for the birth of baby Joel

CAPT Thomas and Raylee Bielenberg, for the birth of baby Matthew, grandson to Russell and Helen Bielenberg

Special Appointments:

CAPT Gavin Irwin, RAN, AAS FEG

LTCOL Mick Mumford, CO 3 RAR

Dob in a do-gooder! Email the office if you know a member who needs congratulating for either promotion, a family increase, awards, or special appointments.

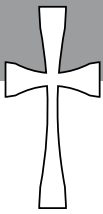
As we enter into one of our most important seasons in the Christian calendar, let us reflect on the fact that God didn't send His son just because He is sentimental; He also saved us so that we can play a role, a very big role, for Him in our world, our workplaces, and our families.

March hard for the Lord,

Mick Mumford

Chairman





Chaplain's Corner



by MCF Chaplains' Representative,
PCHAP Eric Burton, RAN

"I have just returned from the Telstra stadium where the socceros managed to win a berth in the soccer world cup finals in 2006 in Germany. The atmosphere was electric and the joy and sheer happiness was wonderful to be involved in for this soccer tragic.

On returning home to Canberra in the small wee hours I thought with gratefulness about our great country, its sporting traditions and that we have so much to shout about. I suggest to you that our sport, our nationalism, the relative stability of our lives are things to shout about and yet they pale into insignificance compared to something else that should fill our lives with joy - the events of the very first Christmas.


On a still night many centuries ago the birth of a seemingly insignificant baby had repercussions far beyond any single event in history. For the birth of this baby was a sign that God was still involved in his creation and has made plans for us and for our future which is certainly worth shouting about. The very fact that our calendar is dated from Jesus' birth is an indication of how important this event was, and is, for us today.

Scripture tells us that the birth of this baby in a backwater of the Roman Empire would change things forever. His birth was heralded by angels and the visit of wise men and sent the message that the God who loved us so much was prepared to demonstrate that love by sending his Son. Far from living a life of luxury this VIP was born in a stable, subject to hostility from the moment of birth, had to flee from Palestine to Egypt with his family to escape being murdered and was brought up in a peasant village. His short public ministry of three years was filled with controversy and he ended his life as a man of just 33. He never wrote a book, left any writings, or travelled outside a narrow strip of land.

And yet the birth of Jesus and his life, death and resurrection has given hope to millions and Jesus remains the figure of adoration and worship today. Unlike other religious leaders and prophets, Jesus pointed to himself as the Way the Truth and the Life - he had control over the wind and

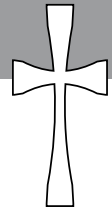
the waves and his followers insisted that he had risen from the dead. The life of Jesus can be summarised in this great verse from the bible; "For God so loved the world that he sent his only Son so that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life". John 3:16

As Defence members we are involved in issues of Peace and War. One of the titles of Jesus was the Prince of Peace. We may look at the history of the world and think that there has not been much peace since that time. However Jesus' primary mission was to reconcile God to mankind - he came to break down the barriers between God and us and ensure that we had a hope and a future beyond even this life.

As I think of the sheer joy and exultation at the Telstra stadium over a soccer match I would hope that you and I are even more jubilant about the coming of Jesus, the Saviour of the world, this Christmas time. 

Eric Burton





Defence Values – Innovation

By GPCAPT Gary Pianegonda



Innovation is the act of starting something for the first time; introducing something new. Military history is resplendent with examples of innovation. From crossbows to cannons, from periscopes to parachutes, innovations in equipment and tactics have won many battles. There should be no surprise that the attribute of innovation is highly prized in the Australian Defence Force.

But should innovation be valued among Christians? How, if at all, has God indicated that innovation is something we should pursue? Has God shown signs of innovation?

Well, in the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth

OK. That's not a bad start.

Consider also the ingenuity of God's great, paradoxical plan, by which all humankind can gain undeserved eternal life, through the death of the one man who deserves not to die. Consider that we are all too stubborn and stupid to appreciate God's goodness, so God gave us free will to experience badness and to make informed, heartfelt and enduring choices. Consider that Jesus could have given explicit answers to all of his inquisitors, and that nowadays we might be tempted to dismiss the ancient context and detail of those responses. Instead, Jesus innovatively used

parables, encouraging people of all generations to examine their hearts for the relevance of God's wisdom in their personal circumstances.

Yep. There's no doubt about it: God is a pretty smart cookie! (Please pray that God will forgive my insubordinate tendencies.)

Clearly, God embraces innovation, which is enough reason for us to follow his example. So how might we serve God with innovation in our daily lives?

To start with, we do not need to try very hard. The Holy Spirit is always with us to inspire and encourage us if we are open to his suggestions. All we need to do is love God with all of our hearts and with all of our souls and with all of our minds, and to love our neighbours as ourselves. With such passion and focus, the Holy Spirit will guide us in new and remarkable ways. While our human cleverness and abilities are limited, for God all things are possible.

But let me not be too grand or esoteric in discussing innovative Christian service. Let me give you some small, practical examples that have helped me.

While I want to share my beliefs with others in the workplace, I do not want to be offensive or aggressive. So I display in my office (among the other clutter) some Military Christian Fellowship paraphernalia. A mug with an MCF logo, or a Deployment Pack, or the latest edition of Cross Fire, can serve as subtle invitations for anyone who is moved by the Spirit to ask me about them.

Many of us have computers on our desks, so you might choose to use the computer calendar to prompt your devotionals. I have a recurring daily appointment with God, and my computer reminds me each morning that I should start the day in

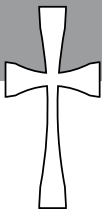
prayer. At lunch time, the calendar prompts me again with my monthly memory verse: John 3:16 on the first of each month, Hebrews 4:12 on the second day, and so on. At one stage, I even set my digital watch to chime on the hour, reminding me to pause momentarily and reflect on God's blessings. Unfortunately, my colleagues thought the hourly gong was more hell-like than heavenly.

I am also conscious we live in an age when many people are apathetic about religion, so we must be innovative and interesting when sharing the Word. To practise what I preach, I created a Bible-based crossword puzzle to accompany this article. If there is space in this or a later edition of Cross Fire, the editor might print it for your amusement. (Of course, you will need to look up some answers, thus revealing my underhanded but innovative attempt to foster some Bible study!)

From this article you might correctly conclude that I believe being a Christian and sharing our beliefs should be exciting. I think the creator of all things wise and wonderful is keen to encourage our own little attempts at innovative Christian service. However, such innovation is more than simple fun: it is a duty. At a personal level, and at the global level, we are involved in spiritual warfare against Satan. There are many souls around us, desperately needing our help to guide them to the one true saviour. We need to use all of our wits in this spiritual battle. We need to display innovation and all of the other attributes which are so highly regarded in the Australian Defence Force. Armed with these values, and with our face set firmly in the direction of God, we can strive to be a force for good, a force to be reckoned with, and a force to win.

Group Captain Gary Pianegonda is a former MCF Chairman.





MCF CENTURIONS

"I tell you the truth; I have not found anyone in Israel with such great faith." These were the words that Jesus used to describe the Centurion in Capernaum. Imagine that; a military Christian getting such a rap from the Son of God. The bible tells us only a little about this man in Luke's gospel, Chapter 7. We do know he cared for his men, loved and served his nation, was generous in supporting his local ministry, was humble, was decisive, and had a very simple but rock-steady faith. Why aren't we all like this Christian? Why is he so rare?

The ADF needs Christians like this Centurion. MCF needs members like this Centurion, members who are willing to support with prayer, finances, and faith. We need members who are willing to go beyond just reading about military Christianity in Cross Fire. We need members who want to see MCF impact the ADF for Christ. We need members who are so led by the Lord to achieve our mission and objectives that they will partner with Council in providing prayer, encouragement, regular financial support, and rock-like faith.

So, MCF announces the launch of the MCF Centurion program. This program aims at finding 100 MCF members who will become Centurions.

An MCF Centurion:

- 1) **Commits** to pray using MCF's weekly prayer calendar; rain, hail, shine, or deployment!
- 2) **Receives** a Centurion Pack of signature items to personally recognise their commitment. This will include a Centurion coffee mug, limited edition MCF Centurion lapel pin, a 15%-off coupon for Koorong bookstores, and Korean War veteran Jim Wilson's handbook on strategic evangelism, Principles of War!
- 3) **Commits** to give at least \$5 each fortnight, either through allotments or annual lump sum, to MCF!
- 4) **Receives** regular updates about MCF including emails from the Chairman about the achievements of MCF as they happen, Treasurer reports so they can see where the money is going, and sneak previews of Cross Fire and MCF products!
- 5) **Agrees** to promote MCF by displaying MCF advertising in their local area and church!

Want to be one of our Hundred?
Fill in the application form and send it to the MCF Office. Centurions appointed before March 2006 will be listed as Inaugural Centurions.



MCF Date Claimers 2006

- Canberra Christians' Dinner, Sep 06
- MCF Retreat 2006 – 20 to 22 Oct 06
- MCF AGM 2006 – Nov 06, TBA
- Forum of Christian Military Ministries – Nov 06, TBA

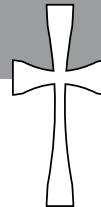
***Need to claim a date?
Email the office.***



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



I would like to make a difference in the ADF by becoming an MCF Centurion

Rank/Title: _____ Full Name: _____ Employee ID (if serving ADF or APS): _____

Mailing Address (only if your mailing address needs updating): _____

Town/Suburb: _____ State: _____ Postcode: _____

Country: _____ Email: _____

As an MCF Centurion I:

- 1) Commit to pray weekly using MCF's prayer calendar.
- 2) Commit to financial support of at least \$5/fortnight as follows (select one):
 - I have made a \$ _____ per fortnight allotment via DEFPAY to allottee #122.
 - I have arranged an auto transfer of \$ _____ per fortnight to MCF's DEFCREDIT account (BSB 803205, Member 66126).
 - Find attached my cheque of \$ _____ to cover one year's support.
Please contact me in twelve month's time to renew my pledge.
- 3) Agree to promote MCF by displaying MCF advertising provided to me in my local area and church.
- 4) Do/Do not (circle one) wish my name to be listed in Cross Fire as an MCF Centurion.
- 5) Do/Do not (circle one) wish to receive quarterly updates about MCF including an email from the Chairman about the recent happenings in MCF, Treasurer reports so I can see my gift working, and sneak previews of Cross Fire and MCF products.
- 6) Do/Do not (circle one) wish to receive a Centurion Pack of signature items including a Centurion coffee mug, MCF Centurion lapel pin, a 15%-off coupon for Koorong bookstores, and Principles of War.

Signature: _____

Appointment Approved: _____

Date: _____

Chairman

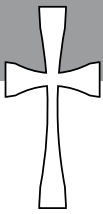
Return to:

MCF-A
CP4-3-046
Department of Defence, CANBERRA ACT 2600
OR fax 02 6266 2530

Only MCF members can become Centurions.

MCF membership forms are available from the MCF website, National Office, or in Cross Fire.

Centurions appointed before March 2006 will be listed as Inaugural Centurions.



Operation Fruitful Tree Strategic Plan 2005 to 2010

MCF needs to change to meet the vision God has for it and the needs of its members, since the ADF of 2005 is very different from the one in which MCF was created. The entire Plan is available for download from the MCF website, but here are the key points:

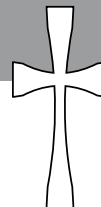
- **MCF Mission.** To promote Christian faith in the ADF.
- **MCF Vision.** MCF believes God wants a vibrant, lay-led Christian ministry to both support Christians as they serve the nation and to reach souls for Christ. Many examples in the Bible demonstrate how God has used military people for spiritual ends. We believe this is because military service and Christian service are similar in the ethos, values, and sacrifice required. God does not need MCF to work His will in the ADF, but he has chosen to use it. Conversely, we need God in order to prosper as an organisation but must choose how to best serve Him, both as individuals and as a ministry. MCF envisages that by the start of 2010 all military Christians in the ADF will be encouraged and equipped by MCF to both practice their beliefs and effectively witness, in a military context, to their non-believing workmates. MCF members will labour side-by-side with the Chaplaincy in ensuring the ethical and moral values of the ADF are reinforced, whilst providing personal friendship and fellowship to individual Chaplains. To deliver MCF's ministry program to its members MCF will have two full-time ministry workers by 2010 supported by a National Executive and part-time and volunteer ministry teams. Full-time workers will focus on delivering MCF's ministry objectives and meeting the differing needs of Training Establishments, Workplaces/Bases, and Deployed Groups while volunteers and part-time workers will provide the enabling functions of management. Finally MCF will design and promote ADF-specific resources for evangelism, prayer support, family support, and local leadership such as Cross Fire, Deployment Packs, How-To guides, and through training such as retreats and regional events.
- **Objectives.** MCF, through prayerful consideration, and by surveying both the membership and the Chaplaincy, has chosen to pursue three ministry objectives and one corporate objective:
- **Objective One.** To be an instrument through which others in the ADF are led to Christ.



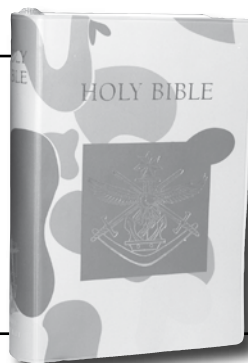
- **Objective Two.** To encourage, support, and develop Christians in the ADF, especially when deployed.
- **Objective Three.** To support actively the ministry of ADF Christian Chaplains.
- **Objective Four.** To corporately manage MCF legally, effectively and efficiently.

The plan has a horizon of 2010. MCF acknowledges that ministry in the ADF is a marathon, not a sprint, since God's frame of reference is in millennia rather than months. Also MCF is primarily a volunteer organisation and therefore needs time to implement substantial change, so most major activities are aimed at delivery in 2008.

At Easter next year the Council will release its Campaign Plan for 2006 in Edition 13 of Cross Fire. This subordinate Plan will further define those tasks that MCF needs to achieve in 2006 and explain how they will be achieved. Anyone that feels led by the Lord to volunteer to assist should contact the Chairman.



**If you would like a
copy of
the new ADF Bible?
See your local Chaplain**



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).*

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An email address is required to receive MCF bulletins.

Signature: _____

MCF Mugs and Lapel Pins

Make a statement with these
signature items from MCF

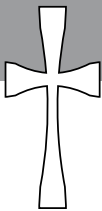
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Department of Defence,
Canberra ACT 2600
Australia

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\$5.00





The Position of a Senior Officer

By Colonel Dick Kail, Officer Christian Fellowship of the USA

One concern for a senior Christian officer is the use or misuse of his or her position for Christian activity. Clearly, every individual must come before God and wrestle with how He intends for you to use the authority of your position as a senior officer. This question may be described as a road with a ditch on either side. The surface of the road represents the path of God's intentions for you. The ditch on the left represents the abuse of your authority. This could take the extreme, for example of requiring subordinates to attend a Bible study. A more subtle behaviour would be to act in such a way that your subordinates get the impression they must participate in chapel or OCF activities in order to gain your professional approval and a good efficiency (or effectiveness) report. Such a message can be sent without your awareness or intention.

The other ditch, on the right, represents inactivity or silence about your faith. You fall into

this ditch when you fail to integrate your faith and your professional duties in a vital and positive way. Satan loves to lead you into this ditch even more than the other. When you fall into the left ditch, at least people start talking about the proper relationship between Christian faith and the military profession. When you fall into the right ditch, nobody talks about the Bible or Christ.

History and experience reveal that there is much discussion about the left ditch but very, very few senior officers fall into it. Too many officers stray into the right ditch, either through a lack of proper understanding of God's will for them, or through a lack of faith.

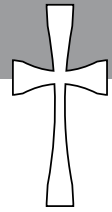
You will exert spiritual influence on your superiors, peers and subordinates. Those who hold senior positions in the U.S. Armed Forces will never have a neutral effect on their comrades-in-arms. Will your influence be godly, or will it be tainted by the values of this darkening world?

The priorities of two senior officers

- A senior commander who was involved in significant and direct spiritual leadership responded to a question on how he found time for such involvement when others in similar positions said they didn't have time: "You do those things that you want to do."
- A senior officer leading a front-line unit in combat who met regularly with others for Bible study and who coordinated other spiritual activities across a number of units responded, "It just seemed the thing to do."

What should be your attitudes toward the spiritual dimensions of position, authority and rank? What principles can you identify in God's Word? How can you apply them in your duties? Study and meditate on the following Scripture notes as you answer these questions.





Psalm 75

Who really is in control of all events? If an excellent record results in promotion, who is the primary source of the abilities and gifts that enable a person to attain high rank?

Consider the following principles:

- God is sovereign. Even though we are relatively free agents with the ability to make decisions, timing and situations are ultimately in His control, designed for His purpose.
- Promotion and position are from God. Verses 6 and 7 are popular verses often quoted at a promotion ceremony. The key question, however, is this: "In addition to giving God the glory for your promotion or position only on one day at the ceremony, how can these things be used effectively for Him every day?"
- God is the Judge. Your final and most important efficiency (fitness) report will be rendered by God. How closely will your life reflect the stewardship responsibilities He has assigned to you?

Esther 4:10-14

Although Esther had a special position in the governing structure, her real identity was with the minority, the people of God. Which would she choose, to use the position for her own welfare, or to take the opportunity presented by her position to be an advocate for God? Here are three important principles for senior leaders to consider.

- God will not be thwarted by a human leader's inactivity. He will cause His ultimate purpose to be accomplished, regardless of a leader's choice for personal welfare or actively living for Him.
- A leader can choose to be significant in God's purposes, or

to be insignificant regardless of human accomplishments. What will be your choice? Fifteen years after you are no longer an active duty senior officer, what will be the significance of the things you accomplished in the eyes of the world, and in the sight of God?

- The combination of rank and position, and the human needs of those you lead, provide great opportunities for you to be used by God. What specific opportunities are being presented to you? How will you respond to them? Are you willing to be used by the Spirit of God?

Expectations from Christ

Luke 12:48b. From Christ's Discourse on the Faithful Servant. "From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked."

Matthew 25:14-30. The Parable of the Talents. Many Christians can relate to this parable, but what do it and the teaching in the passage above mean to a senior officer?

- Earthly things – position, power, material goods – are not intrinsic to us, but entrusted to us by God. The characters

in Christ's parables are servants who were provided capability by their master.

- The more He gives, the more He will expect – yes even demand. Promotion is based upon potential, not reward. A military leader knows each promotion means that more will be expected of him by his service and by the nation. The military profession is very demanding. Christ's words indicate that spiritual responsibility is also expected. Yes, it is demanded by the Lord of Lords.
- He will review your performance against His expectations. Just as a senior officer continues to receive professional performance reviews that are judged against increasing expectations, so God will evaluate spiritual performance against that which He has entrusted to us. Christ's words in Matthew 25 are descriptive. Anyone sitting on a promotion board would understand them. "Well done, good and faithful servant." (vss.21,23). "Wicked, lazy servant" (vs. 26), "worthless servant" (vs. 30).

Continued page 18





Canberra Defence Christians' Dinner 2005

The annual Canberra Defence Christians Dinner, sponsored by the Military Christian Fellowship of Australia was held in a private function room at the Yamba Sports Club, Woden, ACT on 2 Sep 05. 100 people attended the dinner, representing six Christian Military Ministries who support sailors, soldiers, airmen and public servants within the ADF. Additionally, there were five Chaplains, serving and ex-serving men and women, public servants and twenty five officer cadets.

To commence proceedings, Major James van Heel provided an opportunity for representatives of the Christian Military Ministries to discuss the focus for and challenges / achievements for the year to date and opportunities for the remainder of the year. Christian Military Ministries include MCF-A, MCF SW Pacific, Fighting Words, FOCUS, Red Shield Defence Services, Navigators, ACCTS and Everyman's. It was exciting to hear what God is doing through those who are serving him in the ADF.

The key-note speaker was Lieutenant General David Hurley, AO, DSC, Chief of Capability Development Group. An Infantry officer who graduated from the Royal Military College, Duntroon in December 1975, he commanded 1 RAR during Operation SOLACE in Somalia in 1993, for which he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. One of the Army's most distinguished soldiers, his many appointments include Commander of the 1st Brigade in Darwin and Land Commander Australia. He was promoted to Lieutenant General to assume the new appointment of Chief of Capability Development Group in December 2003.

In his address to the dinner, LTGEN Hurley discussed his role as Chief of Capability Development Group and reflected on a recent speech by the Chief of the Defence Force, Air Marshall Angus Houston. He related the 'people' aspects of capability to the visions expressed by CDF, particularly for the ADF's people, and discussed how Christians can be a part of the solution to people issues. Christians can pray for their leaders and support members of the ADF where they work through relationship. He made special note of the Chaplains and praised their efforts. Likewise, ADF members can be encouraging to Chaplains, supporting them to do the Lord's work.



At the conclusion of the key note address, the Chaplains were called forward and prayed for by MAJ Van Heel on behalf of the Christian Military Ministries represented.

The Defence Christian's Dinner continues to be a popular event of the Military Christian's calendar. It allows those who are junior in their service and for those who have been serving for some time to see Christian's who are reaching the highest ranks in the Military. God will promote those he wants to be in influential places for his purposes. The dinner provides an environment for those serving in different ministries to meet and be encouraged to continue to do their part in advancing God's kingdom where we serve.

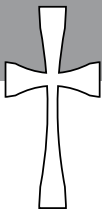
MCF Retreat 2005

In late October thirty nine of the MCF family joined together at the MCF Retreat 2005. The Retreat, at the beautiful Fitzroy Falls south of Sydney, examined "Relationships" under the expert guidance of Chaplain Chris Aulich, RAN. Apart from the excellent teaching the participants enjoyed fun-filled fellowship, including a Children's Program that taught "The Armour of God".

Highlights of the weekend included:

- Watching the young at heart tackling the challenges of Chairman's PT.
- Impressing the other Conference Centre visitors with our singing!
- Great food and no washing up!
- The men triumphing over the women in Biblical, Reverse Trivial Pursuit.
- The Chapel service in the peaceful Log Chapel.

Many thanks to Chaplain Chris and his wife Lee-Anne for coming. Also, thanks to the staff of Fitzroy Falls Conference Centre for looking after us so well. Next year the Retreat is planned for 20 to 22 October 2006. Stay tuned into Cross Fire for more information and an application form.



For the Wives of MCF ...

By Janet Mumford



"The Lord Himself goes before you and will be with you; He will never leave or forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged." Deut 31:8. Are you like our family and in the middle of another move? Even if you aren't, no doubt you have friends who are! Since I last wrote I have discovered a wonderful book titled "After the Boxes are Unpacked" by Susan Miller. During this term our ladies bible study at Duntroon has been studying this book in preparation for the moves many of us will make over the Christmas break. The book is a wonderful resource for those of us who spend our lives packing and unpacking, uprooting and replanting. Susan walks us through the steps of "letting go", shows us how to start over and finally how to move ahead. Two of the biggest issues women face as they move is the grief associated with leaving behind friends/family and the community that they have established with those around them and the loss of identity felt as they settle in a new location. While husbands have a job to go to "an identity", women have to establish themselves in an

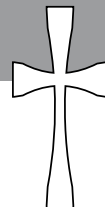
unknown environment. This book is extremely helpful. Not only does it help us to understand that we are not alone in our feelings and that these feelings are normal it also gives lots of practical ideas on how to move through those stages and how to start again. It is packed full of wonderful scriptures and Susan encourages us to realise that God is there with us as we move and that each move is also a time to grow closer to Him and to grow in Christian maturity. Our ladies group has written some of our favourite scriptures mentioned in the book on business size cards. These cards are now in our wallets as something tangible to hold onto during the ups and downs of moving - when everything else seems to get misplaced for a season hopefully we'll still be able to find our wallets! Can I encourage you to purchase this book? It is wonderful to use in preparation for a move and equally (maybe even more) useful when you get to that new location. "Be strong and courageous! Do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." Joshua 1:9

During this year I have partnered with another military wife and met to pray for ½ hour each week for the military

community at Duntroon. Recently another wife has joined us. Do you realise how powerful and exciting it is to pray for those your husband works with, the chaplains on your base, your neighbours and friends? I would encourage you over the Christmas break to prayerfully consider doing this next year. You can be used powerfully by God as you pray for the military environment that your husband is connected to! YOU can make a big difference in His workplace and in the lives of other military families if you will take the time out to pray. Can I encourage you to seek out one or two others and regularly meet together to pray. Can I lovingly remind you this is not an excuse for gossip, your time together should be confidential and something is better than nothing! We have a number of toddlers who join us to "pray" so it is usually noisy but we know that God knows our hearts, He can hear above the rabble and where there are two or more gathered in His name He is there in the midst of them. You do not have to be a wonderful prayer warrior, just pray from the heart and watch and see what God does! Remember to pray for your chaplains who are on the front line...they are the ones dealing with the day to day dramas of military life. They need prayer for wisdom, discernment, strength and boldness to be Christ to those whose lives they touch. Encourage them by letting them know they are prayed for!

** Book can be purchased through Focus on the Family ph: 1300 300 361 or through Koorong bookstores.*





An Old Soldiers Final Parade

By Cyril J Robinson-Goodwin



Stand fast. Hold still...all you soldiers, and bid him his final farewell.

Stand fast. Hold still,... for a comrade who bore arms, he a million stories did tell.

His earthly body will be laid to rest, his spirit will enter the heavenly hall,

His life as a soldier on earth has ended, he's answered his final bugle call.

Stand fast. Hold still... all you soldiers, as his carriage passes you by,

Australian flag draped over, his boots, belt, medals, slouch hat set high.

He travelled the world, he did his duty from many a military base,

And now he takes this one last journey to his final resting place.

Stand fast. Hold still... all you soldiers. Brace up, square your shoulders,

Honour him with military pride,

For with his mates he bashed the dixies and drank in the boozier 'til the canteen had dried.

He laughed, he sang, he fired his rifle, and marched in parades for royalty,

And to his chosen Noble Profession of Arms, he displayed total loyalty.

Stand fast. Hold still... all you soldiers, your last respects pay to mate whose time is past.

Stand fast. Hold still... bow your head or salute him, for our flag is flying at half mast.

Hold still for a few long, short moments, let our history not be denied,

Our Nations recognition, that one of her favourite son's has died.

Stand fast. Hold still... all you soldiers, as he passes you on his final parade,

Stand fast. Hold still... for a loved old soldier, this final compliment must be paid.

He worked and played his hardest, unafraid of making honest mistakes,

He served his God, Queen and Country, his superior officers, ... and his mates.



Seeing God

By Peter Woodward

The universe has order and beauty and design. Who arranged it? Who is the designer?

And a tsunami comes – ugly, destructive and indifferent. Where is your god of order and beauty?

Where is your god of design in a relentless tidal wave which destroys hundreds of thousands of people – nature untidy and incomprehensible?

Oh! There is a God of love; but slick answers of design and beauty and order will bring little reassurance in devastation and crying and pain.

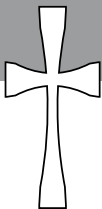
Life is mystery and easy answers will be confusing and disappoint those who imagine they have the truth within their grasp.

Sit with the mystery ... contemplate the incomprehensible – seek after life, hope, truth and love and know them in the scourged one crying for a city – praying forgiveness:

“For they know not what they do.”

“It is finished – accomplished – fulfilled” in dying and rising again.





Staff Worker SITREP

Brother and Sisters in Christ, welcome to Crossfire and Edition 12. We are now moving rapidly towards the close of 2005. Operation Fruitful Tree has seen God's bountiful blessings and the tree is now looking extremely healthy. MCF has seen major changes this year, and that has allowed vigorous growth; the new vision and direction MCF has taken, has been blessed by growth in our membership and finances. All of the success can only be given to God as He has directed, guided and watch over all.

Our recent MCF retreat was a brilliant success and we had 39 people attend; a great weekend of fellowship, praise and worship, and some great and insightful knowledge from CHAP Chris Aulich. MCF will be holding another retreat next year at Fitzroy Falls and I would highly recommend it, so pencil the weekend of 20 to 22 October 2006 into your diaries.

Crossfire has been a major success and we can't keep supply up with demand. It seems that Crossfire is doing an extremely effective

ministry by itself. You will find Crossfire in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Solomons, and nationally across all the bases, and let us not forget our ships.

The deployment packs have been going out by the box load to ADF deployed troops; our 1000th deployment pack for 2005 was forward at the end of October. Please continue to pray for the safety of our deployed forces

Over the last year I have visited: Keswick Barracks, Navy HQ South Australia, RAAF Edinburgh, RAAF Wagga, Army Recruit Training Centre, RAAF Williamtown, and HMAS Albatross. I hope to get to Oakey, Enoggera, Amberley, and Cerberus soon. On my visits to various bases, I have found Crossfire in Chapels, messes and wardrooms, a base barbershop, Frontline services, common rooms, orderly rooms and command posts! I have even seen a bedraggled Crossfire that was dog-eared and vaguely recognisable due to a generous cover of grease and dirt in a maintenance lunchroom. What a wonderful sight, it had been well-

read, pondered over, and re-read many a time, this Crossfire magazine had loitered with intent and brought its message to numerous people. Let us pray that the message it conveyed has fallen upon open hearts.

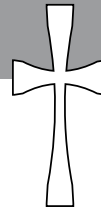
Our task with Operation Fruitful Tree is not over, it has only just begun. The tree is healthy and alive, and the buds of fruit are only now visible. We look forward to reaping a bountiful harvest for the purpose of the Master's eternal garden.

May God bless each and every one of you.

- STAND FAST in the knowledge of God,
- AT EASE in His presence
- ATTENTION to his word
- REST in His promise of Salvation

Jon Belmonte





Lord, this is MCF over ...

1. Praise God that He came to earth at Christmas to give each person life eternal.
2. Ask God to forgive our wrong doings so that our relationship to him is not impeded.
3. Praise God that we have a great nation, family ties and a growing fellowship in the MCF. Thank God for the visits to family and friends at this festive season and that Defence allows deployed troops to be in touch with family in most cases.
4. Pray for Defence families to be united especially for those deployed overseas at this time.
5. Pray for those who have suffered from the devastating natural disasters this year and all the defence personnel who have helped.
6. Pray for each Defence family to bring others to Christ for the glory of His everlasting Kingdom.



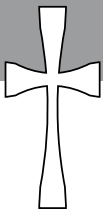
Who pays for MCF Australia?

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.**



www.mcf-australia.com

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



The Three Little Pigments

A parable by Mick Mumford, Chairman of MCF-A

Once upon a time there were three colours; red, yellow, and blue. These pigments were created to reflect light but could only, due to their own limitations, reflect part of light. Over time they spawned, rather unintentionally, further pigments like green, and orange. These pigments were also designed to reflect light, but as with the original colours, they could only reflect a part of light.

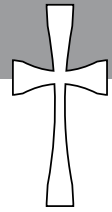
The colours became convinced that, since no one pigment could reflect all light, one colour must be reflecting the light more correctly than the others and so debate began about which colour was the most correct reflection of light. Red argued that as the most intense frequency, indeed one that could burn and cut, that it was right. Yellow argued that as the most diffused colour, one that did not cast significant shadow, that it was right. Blue argued that since it was the colour that more creatures on the earth could see than any other, that it was correct. And the spawned pigments argued that, since they refined the original pigments, they were more correct (but none of the original colours took them seriously anyway).

Then, one day along came the Painter. No one knew exactly what he did but they all recognised he was in charge. They all knew that one day he would come and create the final painting. One of their more serious debates was over which colour would be used in this painting. Red smirked proudly at the other colours as the Painter picked him up and placed him on his palette. He was joined by a delighted but nervous yellow. Soon, they were both joined by very confused blue, green, orange and all the other colours.

“This is not how it is supposed to be”, they cried. “Tell us, Painter, who is the most correct colour with which you will do your painting?” The Painter smiled; a smile that if understood would have frightened them more than a frown. “My pigments, you are all just a poor reflection of light. None of you is capable of reflecting light fully, but that is through no fault of your own, you were designed with such limitations in mind. For the only colour that reflects all light is White and that is not a colour that you can understand. But you have all misunderstood your task! It is not merely to reflect only those frequencies that you are capable, but rather it is to combine together, to complement each other, even to contrast each other, so that the great painting in which you will be used will be seen as a magnificent reflection of all light. Cast aside not your frequencies but your exclusiveness. Celebrate your similar uniqueness but not your differences. Reject only Black for it reflects no light at all.”

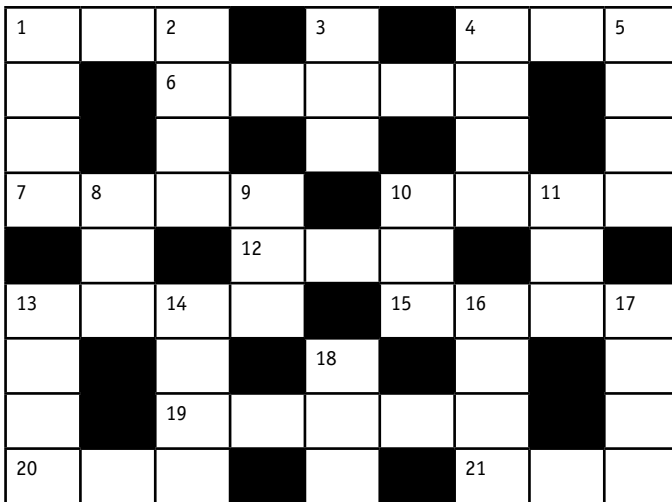
MCF members come from many denominations and Christian traditions. The Australian Defence Force has Christians who need fellowship but are deterred by arguments about theological “pigment” or criticism of the denominational “light” they reflect. Many military Christians now come from churches without representation within the Chaplaincy. How the Evil One must smile every time this conflict isolates a Christian. I ask all MCF members to reach out to those Christian traditions around you that are not part of your MCF group. If necessary, show them this parable and explain that you would like to meet together. Question only those who do not believe in the saving resurrection of Jesus, and then do so as a witness not an inquisitor. Unlike many in the world today who preach that, “whoever is not for us is against us,” Jesus preaches in Mark 9:40 “Whoever is not against us is for us.” He is inclusive, so should we be also.





MCF †word

For those self proclaimed bible scholars,
try this without the verse hint!



By GPCAPT Gary Pianegonda



Solution in next Cross Fire magazine.

Anyone else have an MCF crossword to share?

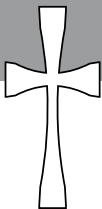
Across

1. I was blind but now I ... (John 9:25)
4. To imprison Satan, an angel brought a chain and a (Revelation 20:1)
6. The number of each bird on Noah's ark (Genesis 7:3)
7. Love God with all your heart, ... and strength (Deuteronomy 6:5)
10. In the valley of the shadow of death, I will ... no evil (Psalm 23:4)
12. A high priest who blessed Hannah (Samuel's mother) 1 Samuel 1:9-17)
13. In the armour of God, truth is a girdle or this garment (Ephesians 6:14)
15. The path to heaven is via the narrow ... (Matthew 7:13)
19. Heaven-sent bread (Exodus 16:31)
20. The first bone transplanted (Genesis 2:21)
21. The Son of God called himself the Son of ... (Mark 14:62)

Down

1. These wrongdoings are deadly (Deuteronomy 24:16)
2. Isaac's firstborn - red and hairy (Genesis 25:25)
3. The first woman (Genesis 3:20)
4. Every ... shall bow before God (Romans 14:11)
5. Anno Domini - the ... of our Lord
8. The number of true gods (Mark 12:32)
9. The first word in God's illuminating command (Genesis 1:3)
10. A modesty leaf (Genesis 3:7)
11. A sluggard can improve by considering the ways of this animal (Proverbs 6:6)
13. God prunes branches that do not ... fruit (John 15:2)
14. Jesus - the ... of God, who takes away the sin of the world (John 1:29)
16. The first man (Genesis 3:21)
17. The location of the first garden (Genesis 2:8)
18. God - the Alpha and Omega - the beginning and the ... (Revelation 21:6)





Continued from page 9

How will you use what God has given you? As you reflect on this question, we urge you to consider those special qualities that you bring to your command and a local OCF.

As you consider the next sections in this booklet, which address attitudes and vision, we offer the comments of two flag officers who are serving in significant command positions with national visibility.

- “Your activity as a Christian senior officer may be quietly supporting, privately encouraging, setting the environment, but you must have activity.”
- “You are responsible as the spiritual leader of your organization. You must be concerned about the spiritual welfare of all of your people, and as a Christian you would like all of your people to know Jesus Christ. So within the bounds of the first amendment (which I interpret as keeping government out of religion and not vice versa) you must lay the

ground work to keep your unit spiritually fit.

- “You must set the proper Christian example in all of your professional and spiritual activities. You should participate in specific spiritual activities as God leads you under your circumstances. (I am not adverse to attending or having OCF Bible study in our home.) Perhaps just as important is establishing the institutional spiritual environment in your unit that will allow spiritual workers to be successful in leading others to Christ using the principles espoused by OCF.
- “As a senior leader you cannot do all the work yourself, either professionally or spiritually, but you must provide the resources to make your subordinates successful. More simply put, your people need to know from your actions that it is right to love God, trust in His plan, and obey His commandments.”

A final comment on your position. Regardless of your own level of spiritual maturity, it will be vital for you to cultivate fellowship

with and be accountable to another Christian officer(s) who will:

- * understand from his or her own professional experiences the pressures, demands and opportunities of your position.

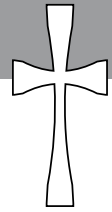
- * be frequently available for mutual fellowship and accountability.

We encourage you to see your promotion and position from God’s perspective and to use your position to accomplish biblical goals.

- Do you agree that your promotion and position are from God?
- How can you actively use your current position and rank to glorify God?
- What does He expect from you?

Excerpted from Professional Perspectives for Senior Officers by Colonel Dick Kail, US Army (Ret); Copyright 1992 by the Officers’ Christian Fellowship of the USA. Used with permission. For a copy, visit the OCF website <http://ocf.gospelcom.net/>





PRAY AND PLAN

A danger faces military Christians when preparing to work for the Lord; whether it's planning a conference, a series of meetings, a ski party or a Bible study group. The danger is that it appears less time consuming and quite safe to lay the planning foundations without waiting on the Lord. Military personnel are selected for their competence and trained to be administrators, so the result of planning without prayer may appear to be an excellent achievement. It will not be of God; there will be no fruit, and some taking part may suffer unnecessarily as a plan unfolds which is contrary to the Lord's will. Revelation 3:7 makes it unmistakably clear that doors of opportunity can be opened and closed only by Jesus. Many Christian casualties result from earnest Christians throwing

themselves against closed doors.

Thus prayer and meditation to fathom the Lord's will and purpose must precede the planning of any Christian enterprise. In Acts 13 the disciples first waited on the Lord in fasting and prayer and meditation and then saw the Lord's full plan unfold into the first great missionary journey.

Pray and Plan is not a technique so much as an attitude. It cannot be applied to every situation. Philip, commanded by the Holy Spirit to run down to the desert road, could have missed the Ethiopian official (Acts 8:26-40) if he had stopped to pray and plan. Ananias would have been disobedient if he had not gone straight to Saul (Acts 9:10-19). Nevertheless, for almost all corporate Christian endeavors it is foolish to begin planning

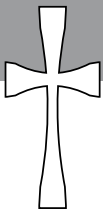
until you have discovered God's intentions. This only can be done in unhurried and meditative prayer with carefully chosen prayer partners.

The essence of Pray and Plan is that the planning process is bathed in unhurried and meditative prayer, which includes worship as well as petitions. Prayer should:

- precede planning
- be resorted to frequently during the planning whenever difficulties arise and
- follow planning as an expression of gratitude

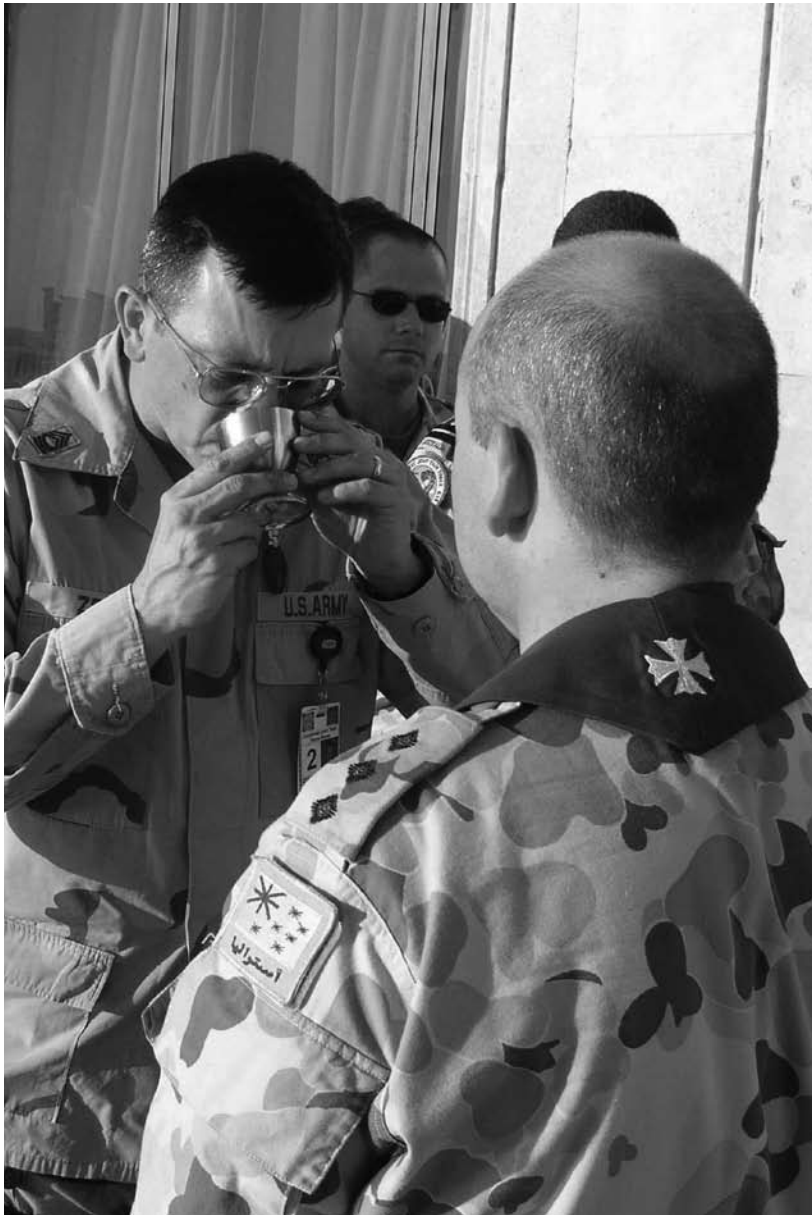
Excerpted from the Association of Military Christian Fellowships Handbook, February 2002 edition





In the next edition of Cross Fire:

- Ethics and the Military Christian
- Bible Battlefield Commanders
- MCF's campaign plan for 2006

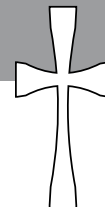


Not been to church in a while, but got this far and want to know more about being a Christian?

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 who 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 in life echoes in eternity." Christians would say "Who you know in life (Jesus) determines your eternity."



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Lieutenant Matthew Goodall
Lieutenant Paul Kimlin
Lieutenant Jonathan King
Petty Officer Stephen Slattery
Leading Seaman Scott Bennet

Australian Army

Warrant Officer Class Two
David Nary
Private Jamie Clark

Royal Australian Air Force

Squadron Leader Paul McCarthy
Flight Lieutenant
Lynne Rowbottom
Sergeant Wendy Jones

*“In memory
of their loss
whilst on
operations in
2005”*