

Father Paul's Current Chaplain Duties with the Georgia National Guard

I am currently serving as the rear detachment chaplain for the **201st HRF (Homeland Response Force)** Brigade, which has the **170th MP BN (Military Police Battalion)** and the **265th CM BN (Chemical battalion)** attached to the brigade. At this time, 625 soldiers are currently active and working on the COVID-19 pandemic response. Their assignments are located in an **Area of Operation (AO)** in the metro Atlanta area which includes Cobb, Clayton, DeKalb, Douglas, Fulton, Gwinnett, and Henry counties and the duties include, but are not limited to;

1. The Georgia National guard was activated to help in "crushing the curve" with the COVID-19 pandemic response and Gen Thomas Carden is currently serving on the Georgia COVID-19 task force under Gov. Brian Kemp. Gen Carden has tasked several GA. National guard units with assisting agencies responding to the outbreak in the state. Daily briefings are held to monitor the actions these units are completing daily in the fight to reduce the burden on local, state, federal and private agencies tasked with meeting the needs of those affected by COVID-19 related illnesses and response.
2. The GA guard has enacted Infection Control Teams, ICT's. These teams are tasked with disinfecting Long term care facilities (Nursing homes) and to date have cleared over 200 facilities and have gone back and disinfected facilities with concerns for new possible outbreak
3. The GA Guard has also staffed enduring missions, these missions include staffing personnel at hospitals, helping with morgue missions as needed, assisting food banks, and staffing Specimen Point of collection, (SPOC's) to aid agencies tasked with these responsibilities to meet the needs of the citizens of the state.
4. As a chaplain for the GA. guard, my assignment is currently with the 201st HRF brigade. My responsibilities are to meet the religious and spiritual needs of the soldiers activated during this operation. The majority of my role comprises of checking on the morale of the soldiers and providing a presence to affirm the mission they have been tasked to complete. During Holy Week and Easter, I performed services on Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday for those soldiers who were away from home. The church provided a spot on our website soldiers could go to and watch online services being provided for the soldiers. I also recorded an Easter message that was published on the 201st brigade public Facebook page. Each day, I try to visit with each of the HQ locations of the units I am assigned to, these locations provide information and coordinates the efforts of the troops who are assigned to daily tasks in the AO. I then go out to different site locations and visit with the soldiers and share in conversation and prayer with the soldiers at the different sites. During this time of activation, soldiers often have family emergencies, domestic situations, financial struggles, and deaths in their families and social circles that occur while they are serving. I am called in to support the soldier and facilitate meeting the needs they may have during this difficult time. It is a rewarding experience to be a source of comfort and strength for the soldiers as they serve our country in this time of need.
5. I am honored to serve as the rector at Episcopal church of the Annunciation and thankful that the parish is extremely supportive during my activation and the GA guard is flexible to my role as rector for the parish so I can also meet the needs of the members of the parish. I continue to offer virtual worship services on Sunday from a private residence away from the church campus. I am including pictures and internet links of different stories on the guard missions and from my visits at HQ locations site visits, and worship services.

Peace,

Fr. Paul+

Pictures below include, Infection Control Team sites, Piedmont Hosp and Grady Hosp, SPOC sites of J.R. Miller park in Cobb county and Charlie Brown airport in Fulton County, Atlanta Food Bank and Never Alone, HQ and worship service. Click on the links below to see more.

<https://www.facebook.com/episcopalchurchoftheannunciation/>

<https://www.facebook.com/GeorgiaHRF/>

https://www.fox5atlanta.com/news/behind-the-scenes-look-at-the-georgia-national-guards-command-post?fbclid=IwAR3yGZbJsz2Vxvd-CDfX7boUe9kQTj1aib-MU7RT_TVnXMwbbk-BL7TZXQ







