



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
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WASHINGTON, DC 20350-2000

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Chaplains and RPs,

Over the past several days, we have all watched the unfolding events in Afghanistan with alarm, sadness, and even anger. Many of our chaplains and RPs, some of whom are now retired, did the most difficult and meaningful work of their lives in places like Marjah, Nawa, Kajaki, and many others. They ministered to their Marines and Sailors in combat. They created space for grief amongst their comrades. They provided care for families that continues to this day. Precisely because of this legacy of courageous ministry, the images and stories of current events hurt deeply.

Yet, the pain we feel reveals the true worth of what was accomplished. Each chaplain and RP that served in Afghanistan provided ministry that was critically needed. The passage of time and the changes of today do not in any way lessen the meaning and worth of that ministry. Your Marines and Sailors needed someone to care, to share the pain, and to bring a sense of the holy into the chaos: *Something you provided when and where no one else could.* Though most of the nation will never know of your work, you have our profound gratitude.

The ministry provided then is still deeply needed now. Our Sea Services personnel and their families need to know that we will always be there for them: before the fight, during the fight, and after the fight...for as long as it takes. Whether or not you served in Afghanistan, if you wear the uniform of an RP or chaplain today, our people need your ministry. We encourage you to be proactive. Reach out to those who may be struggling, and continue providing faithful ministry to all those under our care. It is our privilege to minister alongside you.

Faithfully,

Lissett Araiza, RPCM, U.S. Navy
Senior Enlisted Leader

Terry Eddinger
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
Deputy Chief of Chaplains for Reserve Matters

Gregory N. Todd
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
Chaplain of the Marine Corps

Brent W. Scott
Rear Admiral, U.S. Navy
Chief of Chaplains