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**The Voice for Chaplaincy - Chartered by Congress - Serving Since 1925**

## **Weekly Newsgram - December 6th, 2017**

### **Chaplain Aloysius Schmitt awarded Silver Star**

[The Witness On Line - Jill Kruse](#)

Seventy-six years after his death, a World War II hero who had deep roots in the Archdiocese of Dubuque will be honored with the Silver Star medal.



**Chaplain Aloysius Schmitt**

Chaplain Aloysius Schmitt, a native of St. Lucas and a 1932 graduate of Loras College, was killed aboard the battleship the USS Oklahoma during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941.

After his ship was struck by torpedoes and began to sink, Father Schmitt sacrificed his own chance to escape and helped save the lives of 12 men by pushing them through a porthole to safety. He became the first U.S. chaplain killed in World War II.

For his heroism, Father Schmitt was initially awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Medal and the Purple Heart. The U.S. military has more recently determined that Chaplain Schmitt's valor merited the Silver Star - the third-highest military combat decoration awarded to a member of the U.S. Armed Forces.

This Dec. 7, the Chief of Chaplains of the U.S. Navy Rear Admiral Margaret Kibben will travel to Loras College in Dubuque to present the family of Father Schmitt with the upgraded medal.

"Chaplain Schmitt is an American hero," said Rear Adm. Kibben, in a statement provided

to The Witness. "He will always be remembered in the Chaplain Corps for his heart of courage and the sacrifice he made giving his life so that others might live."

The medal ceremony will take place at 8:45 a.m. at a yet to be determined location on the Loras campus. Prior to the ceremony, a special Mass will be held at 7:30 a.m. at the college's Christ the King Chapel. Both of the morning's events are open to the public.

Chaplain Schmitt was laid to rest at Loras College in October 2016. His remains had been identified following efforts by the U.S. Department of Defense to use modern DNA testing to identify members of the USS Oklahoma's crew who had been buried as "unknowns" at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Hawaii.

*- This is not only a great honor for Chaplain Schmitt but also for all who served so bravely in the attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. The MCA is grateful to those who have championed the cause of honoring Chaplain Schmitt and commend his story as another example of sacrifice and service never to be forgotten. Lyman Smith, Executive Director*



## In Memoriam

### **Chaplain James Canniff**

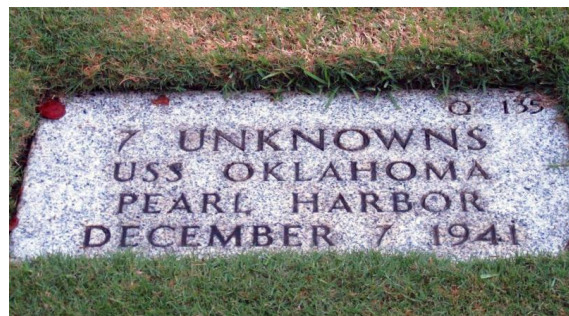
**CAPT, CHC, USN, Retired  
Roman Catholic Church  
deceased October 31, 2017  
North Weymouth, MA**

### **Military IDs 100 killed on USS Oklahoma in Pearl Harbor**

**By: Audrey McAvoy, The Associated Press**

HONOLULU - The military has identified 100 sailors and Marines killed when the USS Oklahoma capsized during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor 76 years ago, officials said Friday.

The milestone comes two years after the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency dug up nearly



400 sets of remains from a Hawaii cemetery.

Officials exhumed the bodies after determining that advances in forensic science and genealogical help from families could make identifications possible. The buried Marines and sailors have been classified as missing since World War II.

The agency has said it expects to identify about 80 percent of the battleship's missing crew members by 2020.

The most recent identification came last week, the agency said in a news release. The family hasn't been notified yet, however, so his name hasn't been released.

Many of those identified have been buried in their hometowns. Others were reinterred at the National Memorial Cemetery in the Pacific, which is located in an extinct volcanic crater in Honolulu.

One reburial is planned for next week: Navy Radioman 3rd Class Howard W. Bean of Everett, Massachusetts, will be buried Wednesday in Arlington National Cemetery. Bean was 27 when he was killed.

Altogether, 429 people on board the battleship were killed in the Dec. 7, 1941, bombing that plunged the United States into World War II. Only 35 were identified in the years immediately after.

## 76th Anniversary of the Attack on Pearl Harbor

***Military power wins battles, but spiritual power wins wars.  
-General George Marshall***

**Tomorrow is the 76th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor and six other military bases on the Hawaiian island of Oahu. This attack precipitated America's entry into World War II, a global conflict. Pearl Harbor endures as a symbol of American resilience and resolve, and the annual commemoration of the attack on Pearl Harbor fosters reflection, remembrance, and understanding.**

**As part of the remembrance events tomorrow there will be a ceremony at the USS Oklahoma Memorial, Ford Island. from 1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. This ceremony honors and commemorates the loss of the USS Oklahoma (BB-37) and 429 its crew. The USS Oklahoma was moored along Battleship Row and was hit by as many as 8 to 12 torpedoes during the attack. The ship's portside was opened up by the salvo of torpedoes. The ship capsized 12 minutes after the first torpedo hit.**

for more on anniversary events see [Pearl Harbor Events, the 76th Anniversary](#)

## Chaplains and Pearl Harbor

*The below is from our good friend, the [Rev. Paul Armstrong](#). We shared this last year but it never hurts to be reminded of the significance of Pearl Harbor on forming us as a nation today.*

In the one hundred and ten minutes of the attack on The Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbor, our forces suffered two thousand, four hundred and three killed in action.

One thousand, one hundred and seventy eight were wounded. Six hundred and forty of which have never been accounted for. One thousand, one hundred and seventy seven sailors of this number are still entombed. Included were thirty-seven sets of brothers assigned on the United States Ship 'ARIZONA.'

Plus one hundred and eighty eight planes were lost. One hundred and fifty eight were damaged and eight battleships of The Pacific Fleet were crippled or sunk.

There were twenty eight military chaplains on Oahu. Nine were Army, nineteen were Navy, and ninety four ships were in the harbor on that weekend.

Chaplain Stan Salisbury later became the Navy Chief of Chaplains.

Chaplain Terrence Finnigan later became the Air Force Chief of Chaplains.

Chaplain Bill Maguire was the Fleet Chaplain at that time, and,  
Chaplain Thomas L. Kirkpatrick is still serving the men on the U.S.S. Arizona.

Chaplain Aloysius H. Schmitt valiantly gave his life to save others on the U.S.S. Oklahoma.

Finally, Chaplain Ray Hohenstein of the U.S.S. California was the first military chaplain casualty of World War Two, other than a fatality.

The remaining dedicated military chaplains performed two thousand, four hundred and three burial services at Red Hill, which overlooks Pearl Harbor.

## **Chaplain Instructor Shares Expertise with Lawyers**

### **By Lt. Cmdr. Robert W. Peters III, Naval Chaplaincy School and Center**

A Naval Chaplaincy School and Center instructor addressed an all-services audience attending the 2017 Integrated Legal Services for Victims Conference Sept. 12.

Lt. Cmdr. Leroy Young was invited to speak on the role of chaplains with sexual assault victims and confidential communication.

The annual Navy Judge Advocate General (JAG) conference aims to enhance legal services provided to service members through integrated training and collaboration.

"It was an honor to educate some and remind other legal professionals on the role of chaplains and chaplain assistance in caring for victims of sexual assault," said Young.

Young's presentation was well received and eye opening.

"It illustrated the importance of us, as judge advocates, cross-training with other Navy communities," said Lt. Cmdr. Nicholas Kadlec, professional development officer at Region Legal Service Office Naval District Washington. "It also helps us to better understand the services and support chaplains can provide, not only to clients, but to others involved in legal processes, including us personally."

Clergy communication privilege and confidentiality was thoroughly discussed.

"Lt. Cmdr. Young's training helped our attorneys understand the breadth of what is covered by the clergy communications privilege," said Capt. David Gonzalez, director for the Legal Assistance Division, Office of the Judge Advocate General. "With this training, our attorneys will be better equipped to work with chaplains and help those we serve."

The Chaplain Corps and the JAG Corps exist to provide important services to military members during their most difficult times.

"This direct training was invaluable for our two communities of helping professionals to understand more about one another's work, and to understand how we can best leverage each other to assist Sailors and Marines in distress," said Lt. Thomas Au, an action officer assigned to the Legal Assistance Division of the Office of the Judge Advocate General.

## South Carolina Chapter Meeting

***SOUTH CAROLINA CHAPTER***



On behalf of Chaplain David DeDonato, you are invited to the next SC Chapter of the Military Chaplains Association (MCA) Luncheon.

Tuesday 12 December 1145 NCO Club on Lee Road Fort Jackson.

Our speaker will be Ms. Beth Kirschner, Station Manager for the Fort Jackson American Red Cross. She will update us about the on-going recovery efforts after the hurricanes in Texas and Florida and the fires in California. Her bio is [attached](#).

RSVP ... AFFIRMATIVE ONLY ... to [samuel.j.boone.civ@mail.mil](mailto:samuel.j.boone.civ@mail.mil) or to 803-751-7316 ... NLT Noon Monday 11 December

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If you missed the November 29th edition of the Newsgram [click here](#).

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