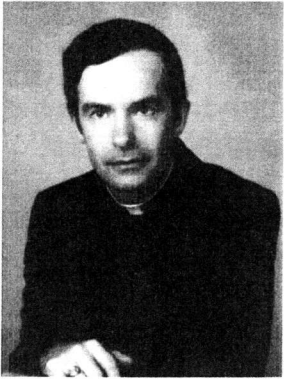


Chaplain's Corner, Hughes Camp Chaplain Richard W Rudd...



Most Americans can remember when we lived in a civilized society where mass shootings and other random acts of senseless violence were extremely rare. In recent years, conditions have radically changed. Schools, places of employment, churches, synagogues, and stores have experienced numerous attacks. No place

where people gather is immune. Consequently, the price of safety is costing us a loss of freedom and privacy as well as dollars in increasing degrees. In the 18th century, it was much easier for Franklin to say, "They that can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety." In a culture that has become more secular, where fear of God and self-restraint have become less prevalent, finding the balance between liberty and safety is more complicated.

Access to public buildings is restricted, surveillance cameras record our public movements, bulletproof and shatterproof glass is being installed, security guards are being hired, metal detectors used, classes teaching safety techniques are offered, buildings are being redesigned, and barriers erected. A new industry to provide services in security is developing and bills are being filed in Congress to offer grants to pay for safety measures.

All wars are fought on two fronts – physical combat and psychological warfare or propaganda used to convert, confuse, and demoralize the enemy. Today, we are engaged in battles every bit as real as those fought by our Confederate ancestors and patriots of the American Revolution. The theater of conflict has brought the front lines to us in our local communities, requiring a vigilance that makes each one of us a soldier. We now have an enemy to fight against, rules of war to fight by, a cause to fight for, and a banner to fight under. Not all of us encounter physical assaults, but every one of us encounters psychological warfare every day, especially through the media and educational institutions. In a very real sense, this is spiritual warfare targeting the mind. While the mind animates and uses the physical organ of the brain, our mind is

part of our soul or spirit. It is where our thoughts are concentrated. Through it we experience awareness and consciousness, rationality, feelings and emotions, etc. We are warned, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind..." (Rom. 12:2) As 21st century soldiers, how are we to safeguard our minds from attack and prepare for the psychological battles we face? How do we renew our minds?

In Eph. 6:11-18, the apostle Paul, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, tells us, "Put on the whole armor of God..." For a belt, we are to gird our loins with truth. The source of truth is found in Christ Who said, "I am the...truth..." (Jn. 14:6) Next, we are to put on the breastplate of righteousness as well as that of faith and love. (I Thess. 5:8)

This protects our bodily vitals, especially the heart, fortifying it against attacks. Through faith we place our trust in Christ and diligently do our duty. Love unites us with Christ and our comrades in arms, the sources of support we can draw from in the heat of battle. We are to shod our feet with the equipment of the gospel of peace. This peace is the peace of mind that gives us resolve and courage to stand against the temptation to doubt our purpose or give up the fight. Above all we are to take the shield of faith. "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." (Heb. 11:1) Faith is to our soul what the senses are to the body. Faith allows the eye of our mind to visualize what we hope and strive for with the assurance and conviction that it will become a reality. Without hope, we cannot live. That is why we are also to don the helmet of hope of salvation, for salvation is ultimate victory. Last, the buckle that holds all of the parts of our armor together is prayer at all times in the Spirit which keeps the lines of communication, supplies, and ammunition open between Christ and us. A soldier encircled by the enemy is cut off from his supply line and eventually loses the battle. Finally, we have our marching orders to "Fight the good fight of the faith..." (I Tim. 6:12) "To that end" we are to "keep alert with all perseverance."

Deo Vindice!

Fr Richard Rudd

Hughes Camp Chaplain