

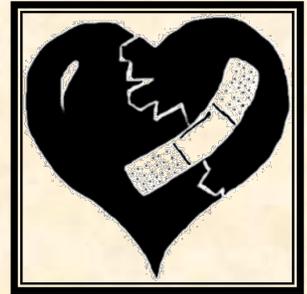


Reflections

From the D13 Chaplain ~ March, 2018

AMERICA'S HEART DISEASE

During this past month of February, we were able to once again celebrate that special occasion of Valentine's Day on the 14th, with Americans purchasing almost a half billion dollars in candy that week, much of it packaged in those very familiar heart-shaped containers! Using that theme, February is also National Heart Month where many organizations work hard to bring about awareness on the big health concern of heart disease. If you were anything like me this year however, news about the atrocious act of violence at the school in Florida overshadowed both. It was extremely disturbing, bringing us once again to question the mental and emotional wellbeing of our nation. I believe we need to be brutally honest with ourselves here. With so many events involving mass shootings of our precious children, along with so many other innocent people, it is now becoming ever so obvious that we are suffering from another terrible form of, *heart disease*. This is a disease that blackens the heart and makes those infected callous and indifferent to our most precious gift in humanity, which is life itself. As with any other disease, there is very little hope of eradication if the source cannot be identified. It reminds me of the horrendous bubonic plague, called the "Black Death" that killed almost a third of the population in Europe during the 14th century. There were two elements to the plague being so deadly. First was the actual bacteria that caused the plague called "Yersinia Pestis" but the disease could do little harm if it did not have the second element, a way to spread. It needed mobile carriers to move the disease from one to another. In this case, it was primarily through fleas, and the fleas were transported largely by rodents. I fear that our wonderful country is facing something similar that we should all consider, and act upon. It may not be as obvious as the plague, but that in itself is also a danger. If the people of our nation, including children, are continually exposed to certain ideologies, real or acted out, that convince them extreme violence is a solution to their problems or even their ultimate statement to such, then we indeed have a very serious problem. We will only identify the heart disease when it manifests itself through tragedies such as what we just witnessed, and have seen over recent years. If we are to have any hope at curbing this trend, it is imperative we identify things in society that numb us to the value of life, and also recognize the various carriers. Technology for example is neither good nor evil, but how it is used certainly can be. As we use it in its various forms, I believe we should be asking ourselves, is it being used to spread love or hate; peace or violence; truth or deception; respect and dignity or a disregard for others and life itself? I have to believe that we all want the very best for our nation; after all, we serve it! Take care and may God bless you as we all deeply reflect on our own personal lifestyles and ways we can begin to cure ... *America's Heart Disease*.



Food 4 Thought: *"The Roots of Violence: Wealth without work, Pleasure without conscience, Knowledge without character, Commerce without morality, Science without humanity, Worship without sacrifice, Politics without principles."*
—Mahatma Gandhi

A Second Helping: *"The world is a dangerous place to live, not because of the people who are evil, but because of the people who don't do anything about it."*
—Albert Einstein

Dessert with a Smile: *"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."* —Paul the Apostle

D 13 RESOURCES & OPPORTUNITIES

DISTRICT THIRTEEN Chaplains ... ***Always Ready***  ***Called to Serve***



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All communication with chaplains is strictly confidential!

Ripples



Would you like a Christian based inspirational writing each month from us chaplains? If so, please sign up for our email distribution at William.M.Stewart@uscg.mil and we'll get you on the list!



safeTALK

Suicide alertness training can be offered by your D13 Chaplains
– Get a group of 10 or more together and we'll come to you and teach it ... it's an incredible training to help our fellow Shipmates stay safe! All materials provided free!

Care and Emergency Resources

HSWL (Health, Safety and Work/Life) Seattle – 1-800-872-4957 ext. 313
Coast Guard CG Support – 1-855-CGSUPRT (247-8778) ~ www.CGSUPRT.com

American Red Cross for Military – 1-877-272-7337

EMERGENCY – Please dial 911 immediately if you feel there is a life or death situation!

