

PUSHING BACK THE DARKNESS

AN INITIATIVE TO HELP
PREVENT POLICE SUICIDES
IN SW CONNECTICUT

NET FORCE

The Need for Deployment Chaplaincy

Darkness has descended upon our police officers in unprecedented ways, driving many to depression, alcoholism, and suicide. In SW Connecticut, suicide levels among police have exceeded national rates of officer suicide. Life Line Chaplaincy is summoning the *net force* necessary to resist, halt, and reverse that movement. Police officers frequently deal with desperate, traumatic, dark, and emotionally exhausting scenarios. They encounter the worst societal evils known to humanity on a daily basis, and many feel they have been demonized by the public. Therefore, it is not surprising that statistics show our officers are at the highest levels of risk for:



While mental health professionals can help on an emotional and mental level, there is growing awareness of the value of chaplains in providing a listening ear and compassionate support for police officers as they confront acts of evil and process the soul trauma that often follows. Life Line Chaplaincy offers such support for these brave officers and their families through *Deployment Chaplaincy*.

Deployment Chaplaincy follows the military model of deploying chaplains with troops, even into war zones. As a result, troops become familiar and comfortable with the chaplain. When they encounter critical situations, the chaplain is an aid and ally. When applied with police, the chaplain invests significant time getting to know officers in non-stressful situations so that they are more comfortable sharing struggles before they reach the point of emotional crisis. In many instances an officer does not feel comfortable going to a mental health professional, but feels secure sitting down over coffee with a chaplain.

“Rev, I want you to tell people that if it were not for you, I would not be here today.”

AN OFFICER, AFTER MEETING REGULARLY WITH HIS CHAPLAIN OVER THE COURSE OF AN EXTENDED TRAUMATIC STRUGGLE.

“He’s there for us because he truly cares, and for us that means the world.”

A VETERAN POLICE OFFICER, WITH YEARS OF EXPOSURE TO TRAUMATIC SCENARIOS, REFLECTING ON HER CHAPLAIN.

“I don’t want to see a shrink. I want to see Rev.”

AN OFFICER TRAUMATIZED AFTER INVESTIGATING A CHILD PORNOGRAPHY CASE. WHILE HE EVENTUALLY RECEIVED ASSISTANCE FROM A PROFESSIONAL COUNSELOR, HE CREDITED THE VISITS WITH HIS CHAPLAIN FOR STARTING HIM ON THE ROAD TO HEALING.

The Objectives of Deployment Chaplaincy

In addition to cultivating relationships with officers so that they feel comfortable calling when there is a need, the objectives of deployment chaplaincy are also to help them deal with traumatic events and provide a “ministry of presence” by being available when they encounter crisis scenarios. Such as:

■ Mass casualties from disasters or active shooters

■ Terrorist attacks

■ Loss of life (particularly involving children) from fire, accidents, and violence

■ Traumatic investigations involving child porn, child abuse or neglect, sexual trafficking, homicides, and suicides.

The Vision for Deployment Chaplaincy

Very few police departments in SW Connecticut are utilizing this type of chaplaincy. Life Line’s vision is to recruit, train, and deploy chaplains for five metro police departments in SW Connecticut. To do so will require \$150,000 per year — \$30,000 for each city. With two counties in Western Connecticut recently experiencing almost three times as many police suicides as the national rate among police, the need has never been greater ... or the stakes higher.

Will you join this “net force” and generously support our effort to provide this important life line to those on the front line of providing law and order in our communities?



YES! I would like to partner with Life Line Chaplaincy to provide deployment chaplaincy for first responders.

Print this page and use the form below to make your tax-deductible gift(s). Once completed, include it with your donation. Make checks payable to "Life Line Chaplaincy, Inc." and mail to Life Line Chaplaincy, P.O. Box 3013, Stamford, CT 06905.

OR you can specify your gift and donate online using your credit card by clicking the link below or going to llchaplaincy.org/funding.

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Net Force Deployment Chaplaincy

\$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1,000 \$5,000
 \$10,000 \$30,000 (one chaplain) \$_____ Other

Name _____

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