



Shining the light of Jesus' love on walled-in souls of our communities!

First Quarter 2022

Front-Line Worker Support*

When I arrived, she was screaming at the officer, and had even attacked him. I was proud of the officer. He kept a cool head. He told her, "I know you are upset. I know this is a difficult situation. This is the chaplain. If you will talk to him, I'm going to forget that you assaulted an officer."

Chaplains serve the public, helping both the individual and the one in authority, by bringing a caring heart. Chaplains are the hands and feet of Jesus, walking wherever there is pain. Most Front-Line Workers also have a caring heart, but often they can't express it as directly, because they are busy providing protection, stopping a problem, controlling the situation, and providing life-saving care.

Institutional Ministries is a liaison to your congregation, to provide help in reaching people behind walls. You probably don't think of Front-Line Workers as people behind walls. Neither do they. That's part of what makes it so hard for them to reach out for help when they, themselves, are in need. Being a Front-Line Worker makes one especially susceptible to moral injury and PTSD. If you have built a relationship with them in the past, it greatly increases the likelihood they will seek you out when they have need.

Have You Thanked Them?

Have you thanked them lately, for keeping a cool head when others let emotions rule, and for running into the very situations from which most of us would flee?

Your congregation probably did a lot of evangelism planning around Easter. One of your goals was community awareness. The month of May is a perfect opportunity to carry that to another step, both serving those who serve you, while providing powerful community awareness for your church.

May 1-7	Public Service Recognition Week Correctional Officer Appreciation Week
May 1-31, 2022	Military Appreciation Month
May 4:	International Firefighters Day (Permanent)
May 6:	National Wildfire Community Preparedness Day Military Spouse Appreciation Day National Nurses Day (permanent)
May 6-10:	National Nurses Week

May 11-27, 2022	National Police Week
May 15-23, 2022	EMS Week
May 21, 2022	Armed Forces Day (Saturday)
May 30 & 31:	Memorial Day
October 28	National First Responders Day (Permanent)

It's Not Too Late

You may be thinking that it is too late this year, but think again. You aren't going to cancel Easter because you didn't buy door hangers. In the same way, you can start this year – even if it is only a prayer in church – and flesh it out more for the following year, building consistency into your plan.

What are some ways that you might be a servant to those who serve? To find out, interview them. Find out what would work for them and what they might appreciate most.

- Fundraise and buy needed equipment.
- Do a barbeque or other lunch. Invite the First-Responder group you choose and the public.
- Provide store-bought goodies for their break room.
- Give them gift cards for pizza with their family.
- The possibilities are as varied as your community, the group you want to recognize this year, and their respective situation.

You could also turn this into an educational situation. Institutional Ministries can provide a discussion on helping people with addiction, grief, moral injury, and PTSD. It is a great way to promote community awareness of the difficulty of the First-Responder's job, while offering future support.

Can This Really Work?

We offer you two strong examples of a local pastor having done this in his community. Contact these men. Ask them to tell you what they did, and why they believe it was a blessing to both congregation and community.

- Pastor Paul Schupmann – St. John, Juneau, WI
- Pastor Robert Dick – Divinity Divine Charity in Whitefish Bay, WI

God bless our joint efforts to share Christ with hurting hearts. – Phil

Pastor Philip Henselin, Executive Director

*This encouragement comes on behalf of both Institutional Ministries and The Association of WELS Chaplains (TAWC).