



“CPCA/ACAP”

Canadian Police Chaplain Association  
Association Canadienne Des Aumôniers De Police

Autumn/  
L'automne  
2017

THE CHAPLAINS CHAIN  
NEWSLETTER  
LE LIEN DES AUMÔNIERS  
LA NOUVELLE



### From the President's Desk



Rod Willems,  
CPCA President

As I write to all of you, I am very aware that my words are the first ones that you read when you begin this newsletter. So here goes – I recently took a “personal leave.” That is the politically correct way of saying that my well had nearly run dry; physically, emotionally, and spiritually. It is not an enjoyable place to be, much less to write about and let you know.

For years, I have sometimes managed, and sometimes battled with a form of depression. Mostly I manage it. Occasionally, it gets very deep. And always, I wish it wasn't there. I call it my “uninvited friend,” because, though I would trade it away for just about anything, God has also used it to teach me about myself and to teach me to care for those who fight deep battles of their own.

Recently, I read through some of the news stories of police officers who have died this past year. Some were in the line of duty or on duty. Some were tragically accidental. One recent death was by suicide. All of these are losses that are felt deeply by their family and closest friends, by fellow officers and co-workers, their friends, and those of us who are called to love and care for them as chaplains.

In an interview following the recent loss by suicide, a staff sergeant spoke of his own battles with PTSD, and then began to speak of the risk faced by police officers, first responders, and even vicarious risk to the reporter doing the interview. It was a transparent and vulnerable interview.

(Please see President's Desk →page 2)

#### Inside this issue

Sincere Condolences .....	2
CPCA ATS Registration.....	3
Regimental Funerals and Chaplains...	4
CPCA Golf Shirts.....	5
On The Lighter Side.....	8
From the Editor's Desk.....	8
Contacts for CPCA Executive.....	9

#### Special points of interest

Chaplain Co-Ordinator Glen Matheson describes the behind-the-scenes planning that goes into the funeral for a line-of-duty death on pages 4-5.

**CPCA Dues after March 31 are \$75. You can receive a discount on the registration price for our annual CPCA ATS by paying this year's dues.**

Please make cheque payable to:  
Canadian Police Chaplains Association  
c/o Brian Krushel, Registrar  
2803 – 55th Street  
Camrose, Alberta T4V 4A3  
[regcpcaistrar@gmail.com](mailto:regcpcaistrar@gmail.com) (until Oct. 27/17) or [b.krushel@gmail.com](mailto:b.krushel@gmail.com)  
(780) 679-9032

(→ page 1 President's Desk)

We as chaplains need also to consider ourselves as "in the line of fire" of vicarious risk as we choose to step into the lives of police officers. While they are not uniquely different from others, so much is on the line as they put themselves into harm's way and see and experience more than one person should in a lifetime.

We offer them our best when we continue to tend to our own lives and our own needs. Our personal, emotional, and spiritual health is an anchor point that they need when their lives are put at risk. I'm not going to get deeply spiritual or philosophical here. I'm not up to that right now. But, I do want to encourage each one of you to do whatever you need to do to care for your soul. My anchor point right now is a promise, "Be still and know that I am God." God is . . . and I'm not.

I hope many of you will be able to attend the Annual Training Seminar coming up in Saskatoon on October 23-27. The training and resources will be excellent, but I have come to appreciate and value the support and encouragement even more. The experience is well worth the time you may sacrifice to be there.

God bless you deeply for the service you give.



**Rod Willems**  
*President*  
Canadian Police Chaplain Association

The CPCA wishes to extend sincere condolences to our police families on the deaths of several members over the last three months.



On September 12/17, RCMP Cst. Francis Deschênes, 35, was struck and killed by a motorist as he was stopped to change a tire of a vehicle along the side of the road while on duty with Northwest Traffic Services-Amherst. Frank, as he was known, joined the RCMP in 2004, and had served in Stewiacke and Bible Hill Detachments, as well as the Musical Ride. Deschênes is remembered for his generous acts of kindness, and had been honoured in 2013 with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee medal for his heroic actions in saving the life of a woman whose car was in the path of an oncoming train. A regimental funeral was held at St. Bernard's Catholic Church, Moncton on September 20. Deschênes will be greatly missed by his parents, his wife Savannah, a brother and other family, friends and colleagues.



On September 11/17, RCMP Cpl. Trevor O'Keefe, 47, passed away suddenly in Paradise, NL, after a courageous battle with PTSD. He had been posted in Clarenville, Bell Island and St. John's over the course of more than twelve years with the force. O'Keefe is described as a "kind man with a big heart" and a proud father by Staff Sgt. Boyd Merrill. He was engaged to be married to his fiancé Roberta White and leaves two children, his parents, a sister and other family and friends to miss his wonderful sense of humour and compassion. A Red Serge service was conducted at Saints Peter and Paul Roman Catholic Church, Bay Bulls, NL on Friday, September 15.



On July 5/17, RCMP Cst. Austin MacDougall, 30, of the Edson, Alberta detachment, was killed as he was cycling while off-duty. The driver of the vehicle has been charged with impaired driving causing death and refusing to comply with the demands of a peace officer. MacDougall had served with the Victoria Police Department as a reserve constable and volunteer before joining the RCMP. MacDougall is remembered for his dedication in serving his community.

Peel Regional Police lost a "promising" and "popular" officer when Cst. Tristan Kettles, 25, and a friend died in a motor vehicle collision on September 9/17 in Mississauga, Ontario. Kettles' father, Staff Sgt. James Kettles also serves with the Peel force.

Officers, your watch is ended. You will never be forgotten. Rest in peace.

CPCA Annual Training Seminar 2017 in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan  
There is still time to register! Don't miss out on this event.

## "Behind the Seen"

**Dates: October 23-27, 2017**

**Location: Hilton Garden Inn in Downtown Saskatoon**

(Please note that the deadline for a discount rate on rooms has expired)



### **Here's how you can register:**

1. Go online to [www.canadianpolicechaplains.com](http://www.canadianpolicechaplains.com)
2. Click on "Training"
3. Click on "Annual Training Seminar"
4. Click on "Registration" and that will take you to EventBrite and walk you through the registration and payment protocol. You will also find the agenda for the week. The ATS planning team has done an excellent job and hopes to see many of you there.

Chaplains who have paid their annual membership dues (THANKYOU!) will pay \$350.00 for the ATS. Those who have not paid their annual membership dues will pay \$450.00.

**Any questions about the Saskatoon Annual Training Seminar should be addressed to Chaplain Kendall Shram at [kshram@gmail.com](mailto:kshram@gmail.com)**

This year's ATS will include:

- Basic training and Advanced training in CISM, ASIST and R2MR
- CPCA AGM on Thursday afternoon
- Thursday's Banquet featuring Natasha Szpakowski. In her talk, entitled Learning to Live in a Broken World, Natasha will share about her continued journey as a member of the RCMP and how she has moved forward since the death of her husband, Cst. Marc Bourdage at Spiritwood.
- A Memorial Service on Friday morning for Fallen Members of all Police Forces as Saskatoon City Police HQ.

**Check [www.canadianpolicechaplains.com](http://www.canadianpolicechaplains.com) for updates.**

# Regimental Funerals and The Chaplain's Role

## By Chaplain Glen Matheson



Chaplain Glen Matheson

Shortly before the end of his shift, RCMP Cst. Frank Duchesne stopped on the side of the Trans Canada to assist a motorist with a flat tire. The task completed, he was placing the tire jack back into the trunk of his police car (with its lights flashing) when a vehicle slammed into the back of the police car, killing Cst. Duchesne instantly.

Living in Amherst, moments inside the Nova Scotia border, he died across the border inside New Brunswick. Thankfully this meant that his own Detachment and OCC (dispatch) were spared the initial calls. The NOK was done, his wife's parents lived an hour away and his parents four hours beyond that, so "family" arrived quickly.

For some CPCA chaplains an RCMP regimental funeral is familiar. The focus of this overview is for those who have not yet experienced such an event firsthand.

As clergy we are familiar with making decisions and organizing funerals. Imagine this: Frankie was a traffic services member from "H" Division (NS), but died in "J" Division (NB). That's 2 layers of people to be informed and involved, and RCMP national staff make layer No. 3.

The funeral was to be in a Roman Catholic church in Moncton, layer No. 4; the Archbishop layer No. 5. and the family . . . 6 layers of decision and information sharing. And to oversee this, a Command Center with over 50 people.

The church seated 500. How many family, friends, government officials, police officers, office staff and dispatchers can be seated in the primary church and who gets bumped to the Baptist and United churches nearby when thousands are coming? Seating was given to the firefighters and paramedics who had been on scene, a respectful gesture that was gratefully and tearfully noted by thousands.

There are larger venues in Moncton but St. Bernard's is the church Frank and Savannah were married in less than four months ago.

A private visitation at the funeral home the evening before the funeral was chosen as a way to enable hundreds of friends to be included who otherwise would not have seating in the primary church.

Extreme heat, a 1.5 km march for uniformed officers and a 2 hour service create a need for huge quantities of water and bathrooms. Individual packets of tissues accompanied bulletins placed on the seats before the seating began.

---

*While attending a meeting at Depot Division in Regina a few years ago a senior RCMP officer said to us chaplains: "We're Mounties – we talk 'cop.' You're clergy – you talk 'church.' They are two separate languages and sometimes we don't understand each other."*

---

To include both regimental and religious rites and rituals, the funeral service was divided into three parts. It began with a regimental portion – the RCMP Guidon marched down the aisle with officers wearing stetsons and swords raised; the entry of the casket, singing of O Canada and a eulogy. Then followed the full Roman Catholic service including communion.

The third section of the service returned to regimental traditions: *Amazing Grace* by the RCMP Pipes & Drums; remarks by both the Acting Commissioner and Commanding Officer of "H" Division; Last Post, the silence, Lament and Reveille, ending with my pronouncing the blessing and Benediction. The flag was folded, the stetson and flag presented to the family and the casket shoulder-carried out of the church.

Chaplains from "H" and "J" Divisions along with Peer to Peer, retired police officers and mental health workers provided amazing care all day before, during and after the service.

**(Please see Regimental Funerals and the Chaplain's Role →page 5)**

## Regimental Funerals and the Chaplain's Role (Cont.)

(→page 4 Regimental Funerals and the Chaplain's Role)

A private reception for immediate family, troop-mates and his Detachment was held downstairs at the church and a separate, massive reception was held at the Coliseum. Burial took place several days later, privately, in his home francophone community in New Brunswick along the Quebec border.

So to chaplains involved the next Line of Duty death, regimental funerals are usually a week-long process. Pace yourself. Rest and surround yourself with a strong support team.

Remember - unlike family funerals where family and clergy make the decisions, when the family chooses to have a regimental funeral, many decisions will be made by the regiment (the RCMP).

While attending a meeting at Depot Division in Regina a few years ago a senior RCMP officer said to us chaplains: "We're Mounties – we talk 'cop.' You're clergy – you talk 'church.' They are two separate languages and sometimes we don't understand each other."

~ Sometimes . . . police agencies and politicians, equally used to leadership and decision making, acknowledge the role we play in the spiritual and emotional health of police officers. We also play a vital role in being an interpreter and expert on church protocol and traditions, a role not all senior officers readily acknowledge.

~ In the RCMP we have the "*Critically Injured and Fallen Member Guide*." Study it and know it (or whatever protocol your police agency uses for funerals). Get a copy and know this by heart BEFORE the phone rings.

~ Learn the command structure of your police agency in such a crisis. Unlike a 'normal' funeral, many decisions need to be in writing and approved by multiple layers of decision-makers.

~ For police officers, especially if their families are many time zones away, they repeatedly asked me if this happens to them, would I (ie. a chaplain) be with their spouse (and children) until family arrived.

~ The moment you hear of a Line of Duty death, stop what you're doing and pray for the people on scene, the chaplain(s) involved and the caregivers. The chaplain(s) will be exhausted emotionally and physically and not have time to reach out for strength . . . so be their strength without being asked.

~ And a week or two after the funeral, reach out to the chaplain(s) involved. Being a police chaplain is all about relationships. It's not about attire or denomination . . . and sometimes it's about taking care of our own, the chaplains.

*Glen Matheson*  
Chaplain Coordinator – RCMP "H" Division (Nova Scotia)  
[glen.matheson@rcmp-grc.gc.ca](mailto:glen.matheson@rcmp-grc.gc.ca)



### 2017 SASKATOON ATS – CPCA GOLF SHIRTS-

The deadline for ordering CPCA golf shirts has passed. Shirts will be available for pick up at the ATS gathering in Saskatoon October 23-27. Thanks to President Rod Willem for his part in making this happen.

## From the Editor's Desk

September has been a difficult month. Memories of “bad calls” from the last year have surfaced as anniversary dates arrived, and the recent deaths of RCMP members has meant additional time spent supporting their friends and colleagues. Family illness and deaths have compounded the sense of sadness that accompanies the grief I feel for victims of tragedies. It is easy to see the world as a dark and lonely place.

As I have been instructing first responders on how to become more resilient, mindfulness is a topic that often comes up—being present in the moment, and appreciating the beauty and goodness that can be found even in the ordinary things. I have discovered anew how much I love to walk by the rivers and the beaches in our area. The soothing sound of the water and the clear reflection of trees and clouds brings a sense of well-being and calms me. Sometimes I just take a deep breath and delight in the gentle breeze on my skin, or the nip in the evening air as the full moon is rising.

Often I have focused on the “bad calls”, but I am starting to take notice of the “good calls” as well. How many times did things go right, and people in distress have good outcomes to potentially tragic situations? What about the privilege of seeing an anxious man embrace his wife with Alzheimer’s who had wandered away and been lost overnight. We make a difference in people’s lives in many ways. Maybe just being there was enough to give someone comfort in the face of unimaginable loss.

Thanksgiving is a good time to pause and look more closely at the blessings around us, even in the everyday things that we often take for granted. It is a good time to thank and encourage others who brighten our lives. Practicing gratitude with mindfulness is a great antidote for stress.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Chaplain Marion Jamer, Editor  
“J” Division RCMP (St. Stephen, NB)



## A Chaplain's Task

A Chaplains task is valuable,  
Because a soul's at stake,  
For we are sent to bolster up  
A faltering life, or faith.

A friendly smile, a helping hand,  
A word or two in season  
Encouraging the burdened heart,  
Regardless of the reason.

Sometimes we feel we're wasting time,  
When there is little change  
But then our faith is lifted high  
When lives are rearranged.

And when we see a person helped;  
Because of what we've said,  
We know we've been a guiding light  
And living Gospel bread.

So thank you Lord for ministry  
Amongst the lost and broken  
Although the help we offer them,  
Is surely just a token.

For you gave all you had to give  
To save the lost and grapplin'  
Now please impart your nature, Lord,  
And help us mortal Chaplains

Copyright (c) Barry Goode 2002

Barry Goode is a prison chaplain from South Australia who wrote this poem to encourage and inspire chaplains. Thanks to CPCA Chaplain Roxzena Hayden for providing it to us.

## On The Lighter Side



## VOS REPRESENTANTS-EXECUTIF/EXECUTIVE

### Don't Forget To Pay Your 2017 CPCA Dues. After March 31, \$75.

CPCA dues prior to March 31 are \$60, thereafter are \$75.

Please make cheque payable to:  
Canadian Police Chaplains  
Association  
c/o Brian Krushel, Registrar  
2803 – 55th Street  
Camrose, Alberta  
T4V 4A3  
regcpcaistrar@gmail.com

### We Are Looking For Your Stories and Input

If you have a story to tell about your experiences with police chaplaincy, consider writing a short article to share with other chaplains.

Have you read a good book or do you know of an upcoming training event in your area? Deadlines for our quarterly publications are the 15th of March, June, September and December. We would like to hear from you. Submissions may be sent to:

marion.jamer@gmail.com



#### President / Président

[Chaplain Rod Willems](#)

11921 106 St., Grande Prairie, AB., T8V 7N5

Work: 780-532-8836

Home: 780-882-6402/Cell: 780-380-0910



#### 1st Vice-president / 1er Vice-president

[Chaplain Richard Vander Vaart](#)

69 Flora St., St. Thomas, ON N5P 2X7



#### 2nd Vice-president / 2ieme Vice-president

[Chaplain Katherine Bourbonniere](#)

39 Osprey Way, Lawrencetown, NS B2Z 1M5

Work: 902-462-1818



#### Membership / Societariat

[Chaplain Brian Krushel](#)

2803-55th Street, Camrose, AB, T4V 4A3

Work: 780-679-3009/Cell: 780-679-9032



#### Secretary/Treasurer / Secrétaire/Trésorier

[Chaplain John Tyrrell](#)

PO Box 223, Jarvie, AB T0G 1H0

Cell: 780-294-9072

Email: frjohntyrrell@hotmail.com



#### Past President / Passé Président

[Chaplain Les Schrader](#)

4221 Kendall Av., Port Alberni, BC, V9Y 5H9

Cell: 250-720-3077 / Home: 250-723-9117

