

# *County-Wide Chaplaincy*

## *Thanks you!*

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**February 2024**

### A Hero's Journey

I first heard this phrase several years ago and have run into references of it in some reading lately. This got me to thinking more about it and upon some further looking, I find the phrase is really, "The" Hero's Journey, and has its roots in the more mythical realm. To put it very simply; the person leaves comfort, experiences trials/tribulation, overcomes and returns home a better person. At first I thought, maybe it isn't appropriate to put my spin on it, but then I thought, these are just three words and I choose to begin with "A" rather than "The", as there are so many heroes' journeys we could think about or talk about.

Once you start looking for heroes, you find yourself surrounded by them! We were headed to pick up our Christmas tree on a cold and frosty morning. We found ourselves behind a garbage truck and witnessed what I call a hero! As we waited behind the truck we noticed the operator kept shaking and shaking the garbage can, then he set it on the ground, looked in, reached in with his gloved hands and loosened the apparently frozen garbage, so as to not leave any behind. I was amazed! A simple act of service, but a hero in my eyes. I am also reminded of a time when a fire engine pulled into our driveway to let me know that my mom-in-law had been in a car accident, that she was ok, but was headed to the hospital. They also said they had all of her groceries in the fire engine and there was ice cream, so I might want to get them put away. What?!? They were my heroes that day, letting me know the accident was minor and Mom was ok, but also going the extra mile and delivering her groceries to the house so they would not spoil.

When I think about everyday heroes, I can't help but think about our chaplains. They literally leave the comfort of home or the warmth of being with friends or whatever else they may be enjoying, to be there for others who are hurting. No one knows when a call may come and what all it may entail, but they know one thing, they are there to help. This help comes in many forms: there to listen, there to support, there to answer questions, there to provide comfort in the form of a handmade quilt, there to pray either silently or together with those in pain if they wish. They are quite simply, "there to help when it hurts" in whatever form that may take on.

February is a month where our thoughts are turned toward "love". Generally, this is thought of as the romantic type of love, but maybe we should turn our thoughts to the not so romantic type of love. The love we read about in 1 Corinthians 13, a love that is patient, kind, does not envy, is not proud, is not rude, is not self-seeking, is not easily angered, keeps no record of wrongs, rejoices in truth; a love that protects, trusts, hopes and perseveres. A tall order for

sure, but this is the love of heroes. This is the love I see in our chaplains, putting the needs of others first. This is the love of Christ, our perfect role model.

So as we continue on in this year of 2024, let us be encouraged to look for the heroes, be the heroes, and commend those who are truly making our world a better place by stepping up and loving and serving and encouraging, even when it is difficult. Let us all determine to be the love we read about in Corinthians. Yes, it is hard and goes against our natural instincts, but we can do hard things, we can be the heroes that make this world a better place.

We thank you again for your love and support!

Jan Richards

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