

Soldiers 'celebrate' life of fallen comrade

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Staff Sgt. John R. Rozean

1st Brigade Combat Team 10th Mountain Division

CAMP LIBERTY " Task Force Baghdad Soldiers came to the 3rd Infantry Division Chapel Dec. 13 to "celebrate the life" of a fallen Soldier.

"I am deeply honored and truly humbled to be here with you today with many fellow Soldiers to pay tribute to a brother-in-arms and to celebrate the life of Spc. Adrian Noe Orosco," said Lt. Col. James Blackburn, commander of 1st Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment.

Orosco, from Corcoran, Calif., was killed Dec. 9 when a suicide bomber exploded a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device near his Bradley Fighting Vehicle as he was providing dismounted security at a tactical control point in Abu Ghraib west of Baghdad.

"We pause to honor the loss of this courageous young man who chose to live the life of a Soldier," Blackburn said. "We pause to remember what he has done, because it was his style to (never) leave things undone."

He was an "immaculate infantryman in everything he did," said Capt. Loyd Brown, G Troop commander.

"I am sure I speak for every trooper in G and C Troops when I say we hold Adrian's family in our prayers and our thoughts," said Brown. "We wish them strength as they go through these difficult times.

"(His) service to his country and unit was exemplary. His performance was in the finest tradition of an Infantryman."

"On Dec. 9, the world became a sadder place," said Staff Sgt. Phillip Bender. "Spc. Adrian Orosco gave his life serving his country and his unit.

"He was a family man, devoted to his wife and his two sons and little girl. He was a Soldier placing the mission first and concerning himself with the welfare of fellow Soldiers," said Bender.

"Although this description is certainly accurate, I do not feel that it fully describes who (he) truly was. You see, Adrian Orosco was one of the few individuals you will meet in life that was a genuinely good and decent person. He was slow to anger, but quick to smile. He would give you the shirt off his back, even if it meant he would have nothing to wear."

"Spc. Orosco was a large man. But this was due to the tremendous heart that he possessed. Never quitting, always pushing and striving for something better. He was a man who took pride in his job."



"He demonstrated the highest quality that any man could possess " loyalty, compassion and honor," said Bender. "We can all learn something from him and apply it to our own lives; we are now better husbands, fathers, Soldiers and better people for having known him."

"Spc. Adrian Orosco was not only my battle buddy, but he became my brother," said Sgt. Jaime Hernandez, remembering the promises he had made to Orosco, including 'that I would watch over (Orosco's) family as if they were my own."

Hernandez said he remembered the first time he met Orosco. "He was shy at first, but when I talked to him, he opened up freely." He went on to describe Orosco as "one of the best human beings I ever met in my life."

"Adrian, I admired that you always placed people's needs over your own," said Hernandez. "I've never known you to have a negative outlook on life. My brother, I will see you when I get there. I don't know when that may be, but take care. I know you will always be in my heart."

"Let us not focus on Dec. 9, but rather the other 26 years that define this great American, great family man, and great warrior," said Capt. David Snyder, 1/11th ACR chaplain.

"He loved his nation for which he gave his life defending her freedom as well as helping the Iraqis gain their own," said Snyder. "We have come this morning because of an incident on Dec. 9, when Spc. Orosco gave the ultimate sacrifice of his life. However I believe we would be truly amiss if we only focused on that single point in time without celebrating the rest of his life."

All the "Blackhorse" Soldiers spoke of how Orosco's legacy would live on within their unit. When asked about this war, Snyder said to the 1/11th Soldiers, "Tell about this great American hero, Spc Adrian Orosco, who fought right beside you in western Abu Ghraib."